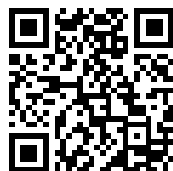

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SELECTED POEMS

JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY

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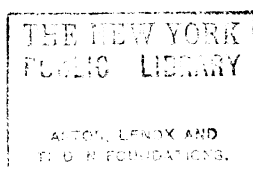
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O'Reilly
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Selected Poems

*He ruled no serfs, and he knew no pride;
He was one with the workers, side by side;
He bated a mill, and a mine, and a town,
With their fever of misery, struggle, renown;
He could never believe but a man was made
For a nobler end than the glory of trade.
For the youth he mourned with an endless pity
Who were cast like snow on the streets of the city,
He was weak, maybe; but he lost no friend;
Who loved him once, loved on to the end.
He mourned all selfish and sbrewd endeavour;
But he never injured a weak one — never.
When censure was passed, he was kindly dumb;
He was never so wise but a fault would come;
He was never so old that he failed to enjoy
The games and the dreams he had loved when a boy.
He erred, and was sorry; but never drew
A trusting heart from the pure and true.
When friends look back from the years to be
God grant they may say such things of me.*





John Boyle O'Reilly.

Selected Poems

JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY

*The Singer who lived is always alive;
We bearken and always bear.*

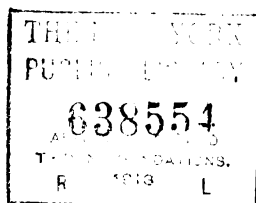
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Selected Poems

A TRAGEDY

A SOFT-BREASTED bird from the sea
Fell in love with the lighthouse flame;
And it wheeled round the tower on its airiest wing,
And floated and cried like a lovelorn thing;
It brooded all day and it fluttered all night,
But could win no look from the steadfast light.

For the flame had its heart afar, —
Afar with the ships at sea;
It was thinking of children and waiting wives,
And darkness and danger to sailors' lives;
But the bird had its tender bosom pressed
On the glass where at last it dashed its breast.
The light only flickered, the brighter to glow;
But the bird lay dead on the rocks below.

IN BOHEMIA

I'D rather live in Bohemia than in any other land;
For only there are the values true,
And the laurels gathered in all men's view.
The prizes of traffic and state are won
By shrewdness or force or by deeds undone;
But fame is sweeter without the feud,
And the wise of Bohemia are never shrewd.
Here pilgrims stream with a gait sublime
From every class and clime and time,
Aspiring only to be enrolled
With the names that are writ in the book of gold;
And each one bears in mind or hand
A palm of the dear Bohemia land.
The scholar first, with his book — a youth
Aflame with the glory of harvested truth;
A girl with a picture, a man with a play,
A boy with a wolf he has modeled in clay;
A smith with a marvelous hilt and sword,
A player, a king, a plowman, a lord —
And the player is king when the door is past.
The plowman is crowned, and the lord is last!

IN BOHEMIA

I'd rather fail in Bohemia than win in another land;
There are no titles inherited there,
No hoard or hope for the brainless heir;
No gilded dullard native born
To stare at his fellow with leaden scorn:
Bohemia has none but adopted sons;
Its limits, where fancy's bright stream runs;
Its honors, not garnered for thrift or trade,
But for beauty and truth men's souls have made.
To the empty heart in a jeweled breast
There is value, maybe, in a purchased crest;
But the thirsty of soul soon learn to know
The moistureless froth of the social show;
The vulgar sham of the pompous feast,
Where the heaviest purse is the highest priest;
The organized charity, scrimped and iced,
In the name of a cautious, statistical Christ;
The smile restrained, the respectable cant,
When a friend in need is a friend in want;
Where the only aim is to keep afloat,
And a brother may drown with a cry in his throat.
Oh, I long for the glow of a kindly heart and the grasp
 of a friendly hand,
And I'd rather live in Bohemia than in any other
 land.

*Great men grow greater by the lapse of time:
We know those least whom we have seen the latest;
And they, 'mongst those whose names have grown sublime,
Who worked for Human Liberty are greatest.*

WENDELL PHILLIPS ¹

WHAT shall we mourn? For the prostrate tree
that sheltered the young green wood?
For the fallen cliff that fronted the sea and guarded
the fields from the flood?
For the eagle that died in the tempest, afar from its
eyrie's brood?

Nay, not for these shall we weep; for the silver cord
must be worn,
And the golden fillet shrink back at last, and the dust
to its earth return;
And tears are never for those who die with their face
to the duty done;
But we mourn for the fledglings left on the waste, and
the fields where the wild waves run.

From the midst of the flock he defended, the brave
one has gone to his rest;
And the tears of the poor he befriended their wealth
of affliction attest.

¹ On hearing of the death of WENDELL PHILLIPS (Feb. 2, 1884), this poem was written on the spur of the moment. "It came from his brain, or rather his heart, full-formed and perfect, so that he made scarcely a single change in republishing it with his last collection. 'It is worthy of the great orator,' wrote the terse and scrupulous Whittier."

WENDELL PHILLIPS

From the midst of the people is stricken a symbol
they daily saw,
Set over against the law-books, of a Higher than
Human Law;
For his life was a ceaseless protest, and his voice was
a prophet's cry
To be true to the Truth and faithful, though the
world were arrayed for the Lie.

From the hearing of those who hated, a threatening
voice has passed;
But the lives of those who believe and die are not
blown like a leaf on the blast.
A sower of infinite seed was he, a woodman that hewed
toward the light,
Who dared to be traitor to Union when Union was
traitor to Right!

"Fanatic!" the insects hissed, till he taught them to
understand
That the highest crime may be written in the highest
law of the land.
"Disturber" and "Dreamer" the Philistines cried,
when he preached an ideal creed,
Till they learned that the men who have changed the
world with the world have disagreed;
That the remnant is right, when the masses are led
like sheep to the pen;

WENDELL PHILLIPS

For the instinct of equity slumbers till roused by
instinctive men.

It is not enough to win rights from a king and write
them down in a book.

New men, new lights; and the fathers' code the sons
may never brook.

What is liberty now were license then: their freedom
our yoke would be;

And each new decade must have new men to determine
its liberty.

Mankind is a marching army, with a broadening front
the while:

Shall it crowd its bulk on the farm-paths, or clear to
the outward file?

Its pioneers are the dreamers who fear neither tongue
nor pen

Of the human spiders whose silk is wove from the lives
of toiling men.

Come, brothers, here to the burial! But weep not,
rather rejoice,

For his fearless life and his fearless death; for his
true, unequalled voice,

Like a silver trumpet sounding the note of human
right;

For his brave heart always ready to enter the weak
one's fight;

WENDELL PHILLIPS

For his soul unmoved by the mob's wild shout or the
social sneer's disgrace;
For his freeborn spirit that drew no line between class
or creed or race.

Come, workers; here was a teacher, and the lesson he
taught was good:
There are no classes or races, but one human brother-
hood;
There are no creeds to be outlawed, no colors of skin
debarred;
Mankind is one in its rights and wrongs — one right,
one hope, one guard.
By his life he taught, by his death we learn the great
reformer's creed:
The right to be free, and the hope to be just, and the
guard against selfish greed.
And richest of all are the unseen wreaths on his coffin-
lid laid down
By the toil-stained hands of workmen — their sob,
their kiss, and their crown.

MY NATIVE LAND

IT chanced to me upon a time to sail
Across the Southern Ocean to and fro;
And, landing at fair isles, by stream and vale
Of sensuous blessing did we ofttime go.
And months of dreamy joys, like joys in sleep,
Or like a clear, calm stream o'er mossy stone,
Unnoted passed our hearts with voiceless sweep,
And left us yearning still for lands unknown.

And when we found one, — for 'tis soon to find
In thousand-isled Cathay another isle, —
For one short noon its treasures filled the mind,
And then again we yearned, and ceased to smile.
And so it was, from isle to isle we passed,
Like wanton bees or boys on flowers or lips;
And when that all was tasted, then at last
We thirsted still for draughts instead of sips.

I learned from this there is no Southern land
Can fill with love the hearts of Northern men.
Sick minds need change; but, when in health they
stand
Neath foreign skies, their love flies home again.
And thus with me it was: the yearning turned
From laden airs of cinnamon away,

MY NATIVE LAND

And stretched far westward, while the full heart
burned
With love for Ireland, looking on Cathay!

My first dear love, all dearer for thy grief!
My land, that has no peer in all the sea
For verdure, vale, or river, flower or leaf, —
If first to no man else, thou'rt first to me.
New loves may come with duties, but the first
Is deepest yet, — the mother's breath and smiles:
Like that kind face and breast where I was nursed
Is my poor land, the Niobe of isles.

FOREVER

THOSE we love truly never die,
Though year by year the sad memorial wreath,
A ring and flowers, types of life and death,
Are laid upon their graves.

For death the pure life saves,
And life all pure is love; and love can reach
From heaven to earth, and nobler lessons teach
Than those by mortals read.

Well blest is he who has a dear one dead:
A friend he has whose face will never change —
A dear communion that will not grow strange;
The anchor of a love is death.

The blessed sweetness of a loving breath
Will reach our cheek all fresh through weary years,
For her who died long since, ah! waste not tears,
She's thine unto the end.

Thank God for one dear friend
With face still radiant with the light of truth,
Whose love comes laden with the scent of youth
Through twenty years of death.

[11]

A SAVAGE

DIXON, a Choctaw, twenty years of age,
Had killed a miner in a Leadville brawl;
Tried and condemned, the rough-beards curb their
 rage,
And watch him stride in freedom from the hall.

"Return on Friday, to be shot to death!"
So ran the sentence — it was Monday night.
The dead man's comrades drew a well-pleased breath;
Then all night long the gambling dens were bright.

The days sped slowly; but the Friday came,
And flocked the miners to the shooting ground;
They chose six riflemen of deadly aim,
And with low voices sat and lounged around.

"He will not come." "He's not a fool." "The men
Who set the savage free must face the blame."
A Choctaw brave smiled bitterly, and then
Smiled proudly, with raised head, as Dixon came.

Silent and stern — a woman at his heels;
He motions to the brave, who stays her tread.
Next minute — flame the guns; the woman reels
And drops without a moan — Dixon is dead.

A WHITE ROSE

THE red rose whispers of passion,
And the white rose breathes of love;
Oh, the red rose is a falcon,
And the white rose is a dove.

But I send you a cream-white rosebud,
With a flush on its petal tips;
For the love that is purest and sweetest
Has a kiss of desire on the lips.

LOVE WAS TRUE TO ME

LOVE was true to me,
True and tender;
I who ought to be
Love's defender,
Let the cold winds blow
Till they chilled him;
Let the winds and snow
Shroud him — and I know
That I killed him.

Years he cried to me
To be kinder ;
I was blind to see
And grew blinder;
Years with soft hands raised,
Fondly reaching,
Wept and prayed and praised,
Still beseeching.

When he died I woke,
God! how lonely,
When the gray dawn broke
On one only.
Now beside Love's grave
I am kneeling;
All he sought and gave
I am feeling.

[14]

THE CRY OF THE DREAMER

I AM tired of planning and toiling
In the crowded hives of men;
Heart-weary of building and spoiling,
And spoiling and building again.
And I long for the dear old river,
Where I dreamed my youth away;
For a dreamer lives forever,
And a toiler dies in a day.

I am sick of the showy seeming
Of a life that is half a lie;
Of the faces lined with scheming
In the throng that hurries by.
From the sleepless thought's endeavor,
I would go where the children play;
For a dreamer lives forever,
And a thinker dies in a day.

I can feel no pride, but pity,
For the burdens the rich endure;
There is nothing sweet in the city
But the patient lives of the poor.
Oh, the little hands too skilful,
And the child-mind choked with weeds!
The daughter's heart grown willful,
And the father's heart that bleeds!

THE CRY OF THE DREAMER

No, no! from the street's rude bustle,
From trophies of mart and stage,
I would fly to the woods' low rustle
And the meadows' kindly page.
Let me dream as of old by the river,
And be loved for the dream alway;
For a dreamer lives forever,
And a toiler dies in a day.

HER REFRAIN

DO you love me?" she asked, when the skies were
blue,
And we walked where the stream through the branches
glistened;
And I told and retold her my love was true,
While she listened and smiled, and smiled and listened.

"Do you love me?" she whispered when days were
drear,
And her eyes searched mine with a patient yearning;
And I kissed her, renewing the words so dear,
While she listened and smiled, as if slowly learning.

"Do you love me?" she asked, when we sat at rest
By the stream enshadowed with autumn glory;
Her cheek had been laid as in peace on my breast,
But she raised it to ask for the sweet old story.

And I said: "I will tell her the tale again —
I will swear by the earth and the stars above me!"
And I told her that uttermost time should prove
The fervor and faith of my perfect love;
And I vowed it and pledged it that naught should move,
While she listened and smiled in my face, and then
She whispered once more, "Do you truly love me?"

*God send us peace, and keep red strife away;
But should it come, God send us men and steel !
The land is dead that dare not face the day
When foreign danger threatens the common weal.*

*Thrice blest the nation that has every son
A soldier, ready for the warning sound;
Who marches homeward, when the fight is done,
To swing the hammer and to till the ground.*

AT FREDERICKSBURG ¹

THE smooth hill is bare and the cannon are planted,
Like Gorgon fates shading its terrible brow;
The word has been passed that the stormers are wanted,
And Burnside's battalions are mustering now.
The armies stand by to behold the dread meeting;
The work must be done by a desperate few;
The black-mouthéd guns on the height give them
greeting —
From gun-mouth to plain every grass blade in view.
Strong earthworks are there, and the rifles behind
them
Are Georgia militia — an Irish brigade;
Their caps have green badges, as if to remind them
Of all the brave record their country has made.

The stormers go forward — the Federals cheer them;
They breast the smooth hillside — the black mouths
are dumb;
The riflemen lie in the works till they near them,
And cover the stormers as upward they come.
Was ever a death-march so grand and so solemn?
At last the dark summit with flame is enlined;
The great guns belch doom on the sacrificed column,

¹ December 13, 1862.

AT FREDERICKSBURG

That reels from the height, leaving hundreds behind;
The armies are hushed — there is no cause for cheering:
The fall of brave men to brave men is a pain.
Again come the stormers! and as they are nearing
The flame-sheeted rifle-lines, reel back again.
And so till full noon come the Federal masses,
Flung back from the height as the cliff flings a wave;
Brigade on brigade to the death-struggle passes,
No wavering rank till it steps on the grave.

Then comes a brief lull, and the smoke-pall is lifted,
The green on the hillside no longer is seen;
The dead soldiers lie as the seaweed is drifted,
The earthworks still held by the badges of green.
Have they quailed? is the word. No; again they are
forming,

Again comes a column to death and defeat!
What is it in these who shall now do the storming
That makes every Georgian spring to his feet?
“O God! what a pity!” they cry in their cover,
As rifles are readied and bayonets made tight;
“’Tis Meagher and his fellows! their caps have green
clover;
’Tis Greek to Greek now for the rest of the fight!”

Twelve hundred the column, their rent flag before
them,
With Meagher at their head they have dashed at
the hill!

AT FREDERICKSBURG

Their foemen are proud of the country that bore them,
But Irish in love, they are enemies still.

Out rings the fierce word, "Let them have it!" The
rifles

Are emptied point-blank in the hearts of the foe;

It is green against green, but a principle stifles

The Irishman's love in the Georgian's blow.

The column has reeled, but it is not defeated;

In front of the guns they re-form and attack;

Six times they have done it, and six times retreated;

Twelve hundred they came, and two hundred go back.

Two hundred go back with the chivalrous story;

The wild day is closed in the night's solemn shroud;

A thousand lie dead, but their death was a glory

That calls not for tears — the Green Badges are
proud.

Bright honor be theirs who for honor were fearless,

Who charged for their flag to the grim cannon's mouth;

But honor to them who were true, though not tearless,

Who bravely that day kept the cause of the South.

The quarrel is done — God avert such another;

The lesson it brought we should evermore heed:

Who loveth the Flag is a man and a brother,

No matter what birth or what race or what creed.

A LOST FRIEND

MY friend he was; my friend from all the rest;
With childlike faith he oped to me his breast;
No door was locked on altar, grave, or grief;
No weakness veiled, concealed no disbelief;
The hope, the sorrow, and the wrong were bare,
And ah, the shadow only showed the fair!

I gave him love for love; but deep within
I magnified each frailty into sin;
Each hill-topped foible in the sunset glowed,
Obscuring vales where rivered virtues flowed.
Reproof became reproach, till common grew
The captious word at every fault I knew.
He smiled upon the censorship, and bore
With patient love the touch that wounded sore;
Until at length, so had my blindness grown,
He knew I judged him by his faults alone.

Alone of all men, I who knew him best,
Refused the gold, to take the dross for test!
Cold strangers honored for the worth they saw;
His friend forgot the diamond in the flaw.

At last it came — the day he stood apart,
When from my eyes he proudly veiled his heart;

A LOST FRIEND

When carping judgment and uncertain word
A stern resentment in his bosom stirred;
When in his face I read what I had been,
And with his vision saw what he had seen.

Too late! too late! Oh, could he then have known,
When his love died, that mine had perfect grown;
That when the veil was drawn, abased, chastised,
The censor stood, the lost one truly prized.

Too late we learn a man must hold his friend
Unjudged, accepted, trusted to the end.

ENSIGN EPPS, THE COLOR-BEARER

ENSIGN EPPS, at the battle of Flanders,
Sowed a seed of glory and duty
That flowers and flames in height and beauty
Like a crimson lily with heart of gold,
To-day, when the wars of Ghent are old
And buried as deep as their dead commanders.

Ensign Epps was the color-bearer, —
No matter on which side, Philip or Earl;
Their cause was the shell — his deed was the pearl.
Scarce more than a lad, he had been a sharer
That day in the wildest work of the field.
He was wounded and spent, and the fight was lost;
His comrades were slain, or a scattered host.
But stainless and scathless, out of the strife,
He had carried the colors safer than life.
By the river's brink, without weapon or shield,
He faced the victors. The thick-heart mist
He dashed from his eyes, and the silk he kissed
Ere he held it aloft in the setting sun,
As proudly as if the fight were won,
And he smiled when they ordered him to yield.

[24]

ENSIGN EPPS, COLOR-BEARER

Ensign Epps, with his broken blade,
Cut the silk from the gilded staff,
Which he poised like a spear till the charge was made,
And hurled at the leader with a laugh.
Then round his breast, like the scarf of his love,
He tied the colors his heart above,
And plunged in his armor into the tide,
And there, in his dress of honor, died.

Where are the lessons your kinglings teach?
And what is text of your proud commanders?
Out of the centuries, heroes reach
With the scroll of a deed, with the word of a story,
Of one man's truth and of all men's glory,
Like Ensign Epps at the battle of Flanders.

THE USELESS ONES

POETS should not reason:
Let them sing!
Argument is treason —
Bells should ring.

Statements none, nor questions;
Gnomic words.
Spirit-cries, suggestions,
Like the birds.

He may use deduction
Who must preach;
He may praise instruction
Who must teach.

But the poet duly
Fills his part
When the song bursts truly
From his heart.

For no purpose springing,
For no pelf;
He must do the singing
For itself.

[26]

THE USELESS ONES

Not in lines austere
 Let him build;
Not the surface merely
 Let him gild.

Fearless, uninvited,
 Like a spring.
Opal-words, inlighted,
 Let him sing.

As the leaf grows sunward
 Song must grow;
As the stream flows onward
 Song must flow.

Useless? Aye, — for measure;
 Roses die,
But their breath gives pleasure —
 God knows why!

*The Infinite always is silent;
It is only the Finite speaks.
Our words are the idle wave-caps
On the deep that never breaks.
We may question with wand of science,
Explain, decide, and discuss;
But only in meditation
The Mystery speaks to us.*

MACARIUS THE MONK

IN the old days, while yet the Church was young,
And men believed that praise of God was sung
In curbing self as well as singing psalms,
There lived a monk, Macarius by name,
A holy man, to whom the faithful came
With hungry hearts to hear the wondrous Word.
In sight of gushing springs and sheltering palms,
He dwelt within the desert; from the marsh
He drank the brackish water, and his food
Was dates and roots, — and all his rule was harsh,
For pampered flesh in those days warred with good.
From those who came in scores a few there were
Who feared the devil more than fast and prayer,
And these remained and took the hermit's vow.
A dozen saints there grew to be, and now
Macarius, happy, lived in larger care.
He taught his brethren all the lore he knew,
And as they learned, his pious rigors grew.
His whole intent was on the spirit's goal:
He taught them silence — words disturb the soul;
He warned of joys, and bade them pray for sorrow,
And be prepared to-day for death to-morrow;
To know that human life alone was given
To prove the souls of those who merit heaven;

MACARIUS THE MONK

He bade the twelve in all things be as brothers,
And die to self, to live and work for others.
"For so," he said, "we save our love and labors,
And each one gives his own and takes his neighbor's."

Thus long he taught, and while they silent heard,
He prayed for fruitful soil to hold the Word.
One day, beside the marsh, they labored long, —
For worldly work makes sweeter sacred song, —
And when the cruel sun made hot the sand,
And Afric's gnats the sweltering face and hand
Tormenting stung, a passing traveler stood
And watched the workers by the reeking flood.
Macarius, nigh with heat and toil was faint;
The traveler saw, and to the suffering saint
A bunch of luscious grapes in pity threw.
Most sweet and fresh and fair they were to view,
A generous cluster, bursting-rich with wine.
Macarius longed to taste. "The fruit is mine,"
He said, and sighed; "but I, who daily teach,
Feel now the bond to practise as I preach."
He gave the cluster to the nearest one,
And with his heavy toil went patient on.

As one athirst will greet a flowing brim,
The tempting fruit made moist the mouth of him
Who took the gift; but in the yearning eye
Rose brighter light: to one whose lip was dry
He gave the grapes, and bent him to his spade.

MACARIUS THE MONK

And he who took, unknown to any other,
The sweet refreshment handed to a brother.
And so, from each to each, till round was made
The circuit wholly — when the grapes at last,
Untouched and tempting, to Macarius passed.
“Now God be thanked!” he cried, and ceased his toil;
“The seed was good, but better was the soil.
My brothers, join with me to bless this day.”
But, ere they knelt, he threw the grapes away.

LOVE'S SECRET

LOVE found them sitting in a woodland place,
His amorous hand amid her golden tresses;
And Love looked smiling on her glowing face
And moistened eyes upturned to his caresses.

"O sweet," she murmured, "life is utter bliss!"
"Dear heart," he said, "our golden cup runs over!"
"Drink, love," she cried, "and thank the gods for
this!"

He drained the precious lips of cup and lover.

Love blessed the kiss; but, ere he wandered thence,
The mated bosoms heard this benediction:
*"Love lies within the brimming bowl of sense;
Who keeps this full has joy — who drains, affliction."*

They heard the rustle as he smiling fled:
She reached her hand to pull the roses blowing;
He stretched to take the purple grapes o'erhead;
Love whispered back, "*Nay, keep their beauties
growing.*"

They paused and understood; one flower alone
They took and kept, and Love flew smiling over.
Their roses bloomed, their cup went brimming on —
She looked for love within and found her lover.

M A R Y

DEAR honored name, beloved for human ties,
But loved and honored first that One was given
In living proof to erring mortal eyes
That our poor earth is near akin to heaven.

Sweet word of dual meaning: one of grace,
And born of our kind advocate above;
And one by memory linked to that dear face
That blessed my childhood with its mother-love,

And taught me first the simple prayer, "To thee,
Poor banished sons of Eve, we send our cries."
Through mist of years those words recall to me
A childish face upturned to loving eyes.

And yet to some the name of Mary bears
No special meaning and no gracious power;
In that dear word they seek for hidden snares,
As wasps find poison in the sweetest flower.

But faithful hearts can see, o'er doubts and fears,
The Virgin link that binds the Lord to earth;
Which to the upturned, trusting face appears
A more than angel, though of human birth.

The sweet-faced moon reflects on cheerless night
The rays of hidden sun to rise to-morrow;
So unseen God still lets His promised light,
Through holy Mary, shine upon our sorrow!

JACQUEMINOTS

I MAY not speak in words, dear, but let my words
be flowers,
To tell their crimson secret in leaves of fragrant fire;
They plead for smiles and kisses as summer fields for
showers,
And every purple veinlet thrills with exquisite desire.

Oh, let me see the glance, dear, the gleam of soft con-
fession
You give my amorous roses for the tender hope they
prove;
And press their heart-leaves back, love, to drink their
deeper passion,
For their sweetest, wildest perfume is the whisper of
my love!

My roses, tell her, pleading, all the fondness and the
sighing,
All the longing of a heart that reaches thirsting for
its bliss;
And tell her, tell her, roses, that my lips and eyes are
dying
For the melting of her love-look and the rapture of
her kiss.

GRANT — 1885

BLESSED are Pain, the smiter,
And sorrow, the uniter!
For one afflicted lies,
A symboléd sacrifice,
And all our rancor dies!

No North, no South! O stern-faced Chief,
One weeping ours, one cowléd Grief
Thy Country — bowed in prayer and tear,
For North and South, above thy bier!

For North and South! O Soldier grim,
The broken ones to weep for him
Who broke them! He whose terrors blazed
In smoking harvests, cities razed;
Whose Fate-like glance sent fear and chill;
Whose wordless lips spake deathless will,
Till all was shattered, all was lost,
All hands dropped down, all War's red cost
Laid there in ashes — Hope and Hate
And Shame and Glory!

[35]

GRANT — 1885

Death and Fate,
Fall back! Another touch is thine;
He drank not of thy poisoned wine,
Nor blindly met thy blind-thrown lance,
Nor died for sightless time or chance,
But waited, suffered, bowed, and tried,
Till all the dross was purified,
Till every well of hate was dried,
And North and South in sorrow vied,
And then — at God's own calling — died!

AMERICA ¹

WHERE sleep the conquerors? Here is chance
for spoil:

Such unwatched fields, such endless priceless toil!
Vain dream of olden time! The robber strength
That swept its will is overmatched at length.
Here, not with swords, but smiles, the people greet
The foreign spy in harbor, granary, street;
Here towns unguarded lie, for here alone
Nor caste, nor king, nor privilege is known.

For home our farmer plows, our miner delves,
A land of toilers, toiling for themselves;
A land of cities, which no fortress shields,
Whose open streets reach out to fertile fields;
Whose roads are shaken by no armies' tread;
Whose only camps are cities of the dead!

Go stand at Arlington the graves among;
No ramparts, cannon there, no banners hung,
No threat above the Capitol, no blare

¹ When this poem was read at the reunion of the Army of the Potomac, in Detroit, June 14, 1882, General Grant, clutching the arm of his chair, leaned forward with intense interest. When the poet had ceased he turned to General Devens and said: "That is the grandest poem I ever heard."

AMERICA

To warn the senators the guns are there.
But never yet was city fortified
Like that sad height above Potomac's tide;
There never yet was eloquence in speech
Like those ten thousand stones, a name on each;
No guard e'er pressed such claims on court or king
As those Prætorians to our Senate bring;
The Army of Potomac never lay
So full of strength as in its camp to-day!
On fatal Chæroneæ's field the Greeks
A lion raised, — a somber tomb that speaks
No word, no name, — an emblem of the pride
Of those that ruled the insect host that died.

But by her soldiers' graves Columbia proves
How fast toward morn the night of manhood moves.
Those low white lines at Gettysburg remain
The sacred record of her humblest slain,
Whose children's children in their time shall come
To view with pride their hero-father's tomb,
While down the ages runs the patriot line,
Till rich tradition makes each tomb a shrine.

Our standing army these, with specter glaives;
Our fortified towns their battle-ordered graves.
Here sleep our valiant, sown like dragons' teeth;
Here new-born sons renew the pious wreath;
Here proud Columbia bends with tear-stirred mouth,
To kiss their blood-seal, binding North and South;

A M E R I C A

Two clasping hands upon the knot they tied
When Union lived and Human Slavery died!

Who doubt our strength or measure it with those
Whose armed millions wait for coming foes,
They judge by royal standards that depend
On hireling hands to threaten or defend,
That keep their war-dogs chained in time of peace,
And dread a foe scarce less than their release.
Who hunt wild beasts with cheetahs, fiercely tame,
Must watch their hounds as well as fear their game.

Around our veterans hung no dread nor doubt
When twice a million men were mustered out.
As scattered seed in new-plowed land, or flakes
Of springtime snow descend in smiling lakes,
Our war-born soldiers sank into the sea
Of peaceful life and fruitful energy.
No sign remained of that vast army save
In field and street new workmen, bronzed and grave;
Some whistling teamsters still in army vest;
Some quiet citizens with medaled breast.

So died the hatred of our brother feud;
The conflict o'er the triumph was subdued.
What victor king e'er spared the conquered foe?
How much of mercy did strong Prussia show
When anguished Paris at her feet lay prone?
The German trumpet rang above her moan,

AMERICA

The clink of Uhlan spurs her temples knew,
Her Arch of Triumph spanned their triumph too.

Not thus, O South! when thy proud head was low,
Thy passionate heart laid open to the foe.
Not thus, Virginia, did thy victors meet
At Appomattox him who bore defeat.
No brutal show abased thine honored State;
Grant turned from Richmond at the very gate!

O Land magnanimous, republican!
The last for Nationhood, the first for Man!
Because thy lines by Freedom's hand were laid,
Profound the sin to change or retrograde.
From base to cresting let thy work be new;
'Twas not by aping foreign ways it grew.
To struggling peoples give at least applause;
Let equities, not precedent, subtend your laws;
Like rays from that great Eye the altars show,
That fall triangular, free states should grow,
The soul above, the brain and hand below.
Believe that strength lies not in steel nor stone;
That perils wait the land whose heavy throne,
Though ringed by swords and rich with titled show,
Is based on fettered misery below;
That nations grow where every class unites
For common interests and common rights;
Where no caste barrier stays the poor man's son,
Till step by step the topmost height is won;

A M E R I C A

Where every hand subscribes to every rule,
And free as air are voice and vote and school!
A nation's years are centuries. Let Art
Portray thy first, and Liberty will start
From every field in Europe at the sight.
"Why stand these thrones between us and the light?"
Strong men will ask. "Who built these frontier towers
To bar out men of kindred blood with ours?"

Oh, this thy work, Republic! this thy health,
To prove man's birthright to a commonwealth;
To teach the peoples to be strong and wise,
Till armies, nations, nobles, royalties,
Are laid at rest with all their fears and hates;
Till Europe's thirteen monarchies are states,
Without a barrier and without a throne,
Of one grand federation like our own!

WHAT IS GOOD

WHAT is the real good?"
I asked in musing mood.

Order, said the law court;
Knowledge, said the school;
Truth, said the wise man;
Pleasure, said the fool;
Love, said the maiden;
Beauty, said the page;
Freedom, said the dreamer;
Home, said the sage;
Fame, said the soldier;
Equity, the seer; —

Spake my heart full sadly:
"The answer is not here."

Then within my bosom
Softly this I heard:
"Each heart holds the secret:
Kindness is the word."

GOLU

ONCE I had a little sweetheart
In the land of the Malay, —
Such a little yellow sweetheart!
Warm and peerless as the day
Of her own dear sunny island,
Keimar, in the far, far East,
Where the mango and banana
Made us many a merry feast.

Such a little copper sweetheart
Was my Golu, plump and round,
With her hair all blue-black streaming
O'er her to the very ground.
Soft and clear as dewdrop clinging
To a grass blade was her eye;
For the heart below was purer
Than the hill-stream whispering by.

Costly robes were not for Golu:
No more raiment did she need
Than the milky budding breadfruit
Or the lily of the mead.
And she was my little sweetheart
Many a sunny summer day,
When we ate the fragrant guavas
In the land of the Malay.

G O L U

Life was laughing then. Ah! Golu,
Do you think of that old time,
And of all the tales I told you
Of my colder Western clime?
Do you think how happy were we
When we sailed to strip the palm,
And we made a lateen arbor
Of the boat-sail in the calm?

They may call you semi-savage,
Golu! I cannot forget
How I poised my little sweetheart
Like a copper statuette.
Now my path lies through the cities,
But they cannot drive away
My sweet dreams of little Golu
And the land of the Malay.

AT BEST

THE faithful helm commands the keel,
From port to port fair breezes blow;
But the ship must sail the convex sea,
Nor may she straighter go.

So, man to man; in fair accord,
On thought and will, the winds may wait;
But the world will bend the passing word,
Though its shortest course be straight.

From soul to soul the shortest line
At best will bended be;
The ship that holds the straightest course
Still sails the convex sea.

*Exile is God's alchemy! Nations He forms like metals,
Mixing their strength and their tenderness;
Tempering pride with shame and victory with affliction;
Meting their courage, their faith, and their fortitude,
Timing their genesis to the world's needs !*

THE EXILE OF THE GAEL

“**W**HAT have ye brought to our Nation-building,
Sons of the Gael?
What is your burden or guerdon from old Innisfail?”

No treason we bring from Erin — nor bring we shame
nor guilt!

The sword we hold may be broken, but we have not
dropped the hilt!

The wreath we bear to Columbia is twisted of thorns,
not bays,

And the songs we sing are saddened by thoughts of
desolate days.

But the hearts we bring for Freedom are washed in
the surge of tears,

And we claim our right by a People's fight outliving
a thousand years!”

“What bring ye else to the Building?”

“Oh, willing hands to toil;
Strong natures tuned to the harvest-song and bound
to the kindly soil;

Bold pioneers for the wilderness, defenders in the
field, —

THE EXILE OF THE GAEL

The sons of a race of soldiers who never learned to
yield.

Young hearts with duty brimming — as faith makes
sweet the due;

Their truth to me their witness they cannot be false to
you!”

“What send ye else, old Mother, to raise our mighty
wall?

For we must build against Kings and Wrongs a fortress
never to fall.”

“I send you in cradle and bosom, wise brain and
eloquent tongue,

Whose crowns should engild my crowning, whose songs
for me should be sung.

Oh flowers unblown, from lonely fields, my daughters
with hearts aglow,

With pulses warm with sympathies, with bosoms pure
as snow, —

I smile through tears as the clouds unroll — my widen-
ing river that runs!

My lost ones grown in radiant growth — proud
mothers of free-born sons.”

“It is well, aye well, old Erin! The sons you give
to me

Are symbolled long in flag and song — your Sunburst
on the Sea.

THE EXILE OF THE GAEL

All mine by the chrism of Freedom, still yours by
their love's belief;
And truest to me shall the tenderest be in a suffering
Mother's grief.
Their loss is the change of the wave to the cloud, of
the dew to the river and main;
Their hope shall persist through the sea and the mist,
and thy streams shall be filled again.
As the smolt of the salmon go down to the sea, and as
surely come back to the river,
Their love shall be yours while your sorrow endures,
for God guardeth His right forever."

WAITING

HE is coming! he is coming! in my throbbing breast
I feel it;
There is music in my blood, and it whispers all day
long,
That my love unknown comes toward me! Ah, my
heart he need not steal it,
For I cannot hide the secret that it murmurs in its
song!

Oh the sweet bursting flowers! how they open, never
blushing,
Laying bare their fragrant bosoms to the kisses of
the sun!
And the birds — I thought 'twas poets only read their
tender gushing,
But I hear their pleading stories, and I know them
every one.

“He is coming!” says my heart. I may raise my eyes
and greet him;
I may meet him any moment — shall I know him
when I see?
And my heart laughs back the answer — I can tell him
when I meet him,
For our eyes will kiss and mingle ere he speaks a
word to me.

WAITING

Oh, I'm longing for his coming — in the dark my arms
outreaching;

To hasten you, my love, see, I lay my bosom bare!

Ah, the night-wind! I shudder, and my hands are
raised beseeching —

It wailed so light a death-sigh that passed me in
the air!

THREE GRAVES

HOW did he live, this dead man here,
With the temple above his grave?
He lived as a great one; from cradle to bier
He was nursed in luxury, trained in pride,
When the wish was born, it was gratified;
Without thanks he took, without heed he gave.
The common man was to him a clod
From whom he was far as a demigod.
His duties? To see that his rents were paid.
His pleasure? To know that the crown obeyed.
His pulse, if you felt it, throbbed apart,
With a separate stroke from the people's heart.
But whom did he love, and whom did he bless?
Was the life of him more than a man's, or less?
I know not. He died. There was none to blame,
And as few to weep; but these marbles came
For the temple that rose to preserve his name!

How did he live that other dead man,
From the graves apart and alone?
As a great one too? Yes, this was one
Who lived to labor and study and plan.
The earth's deep thought he loved to reveal;
He banded the breast of the land with steel;
The thread of his toil he never broke;

THREE GRAVES

He filled the cities with wheels and smoke,
And workers by day and workers by night,
For the day was too short for his vigor's flight.
Too firm was he to be feeling and giving;
For labor, for gain, was a life worth living.
He worshiped Industry, dreamt of her, sighed for her,
Potent he grew by her, famous he died for her.
They say he improved the world in his time,
That his mills and mines were a work sublime.
When he died — the laborers rested and sighed;
Which was it — because he had lived, or died?

And how did he live, that dead man there,
In the country churchyard laid?
Oh, he? He came for the sweet field air;
He was tired of the town, and he took no pride
In its fashion or fame. He returned and died
In the place he loved, where a child he played
With those who have knelt by his grave and prayed.
He ruled no serfs, and he knew no pride;
He was one with the workers, side by side;
He hated a mill, and a mine, and a town,
With their fever of misery, struggle, renown;
He could never believe but a man was made
For a nobler end than the glory of trade.
For the youth he mourned with an endless pity
Who were cast like snow on the streets of the city.
He was weak, maybe, but he lost no friend;
Who loved him once, loved on to the end.

THREE GRAVES

He mourned all selfish and shrewd endeavor,
But he never injured a weak one — never.
When censure was passed, he was kindly dumb;
He was never so wise but a fault would come;
He was never so old that he failed to enjoy
The games and dreams he had loved when a boy.
He erred and was sorry, but never drew
A trusting heart from the pure and true.
When friends look back from the years to be,
God grant they may say such things of me.

A DEAD MAN

THE Trapper died — our hero — and we grieved;
In every heart in camp the sorrow stirred.
“His soul was red!” the Indian cried, bereaved;
“A white man he!” the grim old Yankee’s word.

So, brief and strong, each mourner gave his best —
How kind he was, how brave, how keen to track;
And as we laid him by the pines to rest,
A Negro spoke, with tears: “His heart was black!”

*Nation of sun and sin
Thy flowers and crimes are red,
And thy heart is sore within
While the glory crowns thy head.
Land of the songless birds,
What was thine ancient crime,
Burning through lapse of time
Like a prophet's cursing words?*

*Aloes and myrrh and tears
Mix in thy bitter wine:
Drink, while the cup is thine,
Drink, for the draught is sign
Of thy reign in the coming years.*

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

O BEAUTEOUS Southland! land of yellow air,
That hangeth o'er thee, slumbering, and doth
hold

The moveless foliage of thy valleys fair
And wooded hills, like aureole of gold.

O thou, discovered ere the fitting time,
Ere Nature in completion turned thee forth!
Ere aught was finished but thy peerless clime
Thy virgin breath allured the amorous North.

O land, God made thee wondrous to the eye,
But His sweet singers thou hast never heard;
He left thee, meaning to come by-and-by,
And give rich voice to every bright-winged bird.

He painted with fresh hues thy myriad flowers,
But left them scentless; ah, their woful dole,
Like sad reproach of their Creator's powers, —
To make so sweet fair bodies, void of soul.

He blessed thy flowers with honey; every bell
Looks earthward, sunward, with a yearning wist;
But no bee-lover ever notes the swell
Of hearts, like lips, a-hungering to be kist.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

He gave thee trees of odorous precious wood;
But, midst them all, bloomed not one tree of fruit.
He looked, but said not that His work was good,
When leaving thee all perfumeless and mute!

O strange land, thou art virgin! thou art more
Than fig-tree barren! Would that I could paint
For others' eyes the glory of the shore
Where last I saw thee; but the senses faint

In soft delicious dreaming when they drain
Thy wine of color. Virgin fair thou art,
All sweetly fruitful, waiting with soft pain
The spouse who comes to wake thy sleeping heart.

A BUILDER'S LESSON

“**H**OW shall I a habit break?”
As you did that habit make.
As you gathered, you must lose;
As you yielded, now refuse.
Thread by thread the strands we twist
Till they bind us neck and wrist;
Thread by thread the patient hand
Must untwine ere free we stand.
As we builded, stone by stone,
We must toil unhelped, alone,
Till the wall is overthrown.

But remember, as we try,
Lighter every test goes by;
Wading in, the stream grows deep
Toward the center's downward sweep.
Backward turn, each step ashore
Shallower is than that before.

Ah! the precious years we waste
Leveling what we raised in haste;
Doing what must be undone
Ere content or love be won!
First across the gulf we cast
Kite-borne threads, till lines are passed,
And habit builds the bridge at last.

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*How can I show you all the silent birds
With strange metallic glintings on the wing?
Or how tell half their sadness in cold words, —
The poor dumb lutes, the birds that never sing?*

THE AUSTRALIAN BUSH ¹

FROM southern Iceland sweeps the cool sea breeze
To fan the earth and bless the suffering trees,
And bears dense clouds with bursting weight of rain
To soothe with moisture all the parching pain.
Thrice-welcomed clouds from seaward settle down
O'er thirsting Nature. Now the trees' dull brown
Is washed away, and leaflet buds appear,
And youngling undergrowth, and far and near
The bush is whispering in her pent-up glee,
As myriad roots bestir them to be free,
And drink the soaking moisture. Then bright heaven
Shows clear, as inland are the spent clouds driven —
And oh! that arch, that sky's intensate hue!
That deep, God-painted, unimagined blue
Through which the golden sun now smiling sails,
And sends his love to fructify the vales
That late he seemed to curse.

Earth throbs and heaves
With pregnant prescience of life and leaves.
The shadows darken neath the tall trees' screen,
While round their stems the rank and velvet green
Of undergrowth is deeper still. And there,
Within the double shade and steaming air,
The scarlet palm has fixed its noxious root,
And hangs the glorious poison of its fruit;
The steel-blue silent birds take rapid flight
From earth to tree and tree to earth; and there
The crimson-plumaged parrot cleaves the air

¹ From "The King of the Vasse."

THE AUSTRALIAN BUSH

Like flying fire, and huge brown owls awake
To watch, far down, the stealing carpet snake,
Fresh-skinned and glowing in his changing dyes,
With evil wisdom in the cruel eyes
That glint like gems as o'er his head flits by
The blue-black armor of the Emperor-fly.
High overhead is color: round and round
The towering gums and tuads, closely wound
Like cables, creep the climbers to the sun,
And over all the reaching branches run
And hang, and still send shoots that climb and wind
Till every arm and spray and leaf is twined,
And miles of trees, like brethren joined in love,
Are drawn and laced. Around them and above,
When all is knit, the creeper rests for days
As gathering might; and then, one blinding blaze
Of very glory sends, in wealth and strength,
Of scarlet flowers o'er the forest's length.

And all the humid earth displays its powers
Of prayer, with incense from the hearts of flowers
That load the air with beauty and with wine
Of mingled color, as with one design
Of making there a carpet to be trod
In woven splendor, by the feet of God.
And in the stranger's heart the thoughts grew deep
With listening to the solemn rustling sweep
From wings of silence, and the earth's great psalm
Intoned forever by the forest's calm.

PEACE AND PAIN

THE day and night are symbols of creation,
And each has part in all that God has made;
There is no ill without its compensation,
And life and death are only light and shade.
There never beat a heart so base and sordid
But felt at times a sympathetic glow;
There never lived a virtue unrewarded,
Nor died a vice without its meed of woe.

In this brief life despair should never reach us;
The sea looks wide because the shores are dim;
The star that led the Magi still can teach us
The way to go if we but look to Him.
And as we wade, the darkness closing o'er us,
The hungry waters surging to the chin,
Our deeds will rise like stepping-stones before us —
The good and bad — for we may use the sin.

A sin of youth, atoned for and forgiven,
Takes on a virtue, if we choose to find:
When clouds across our onward path are driven,
We still may steer by its pale light behind.
A sin forgotten is in part to pay for,
A sin remembered is a constant gain:
Sorrow, next joy, is what we ought to pray for,
As next to peace we profit by most pain.

Wherever a principle dies —

Nay, principles never die !

But wherever a ruler lies,

And a people share the lie,

When right is crushed by force,

And manhood is stricken dead,

There dwelleth the ancient curse,

And the blood of the earth is red.

CRISPUS ATTUCKS ¹

NEGRO PATRIOT, KILLED IN BOSTON, MARCH 5, 1770

SHALL we take for a sign this Negro-slave with
unfamiliar name,
With his poor companions, nameless too, till their lives
leaped forth in flame?
Yea, surely, the verdict is not for us, to render or deny;
We can only interpret the symbol; God chose these
men to die
As teachers and types that to humble lives may chief
award be made;
That from lowly ones, and rejected stones, the temple's
base is laid!

Oh, blood of the people! changeless tide, through
century, creed, and race!
Still one as the sweet salt sea is one, though tempered
by sun and place;
The same in the ocean currents, and the same in the
sheltered seas;

¹ The Boston Massacre, March 5, 1770, may be regarded as the first act in the drama of the American Revolution. "From that moment," said Daniel Webster, "we may date the severance of the British Empire."

CRISPUS ATTUCKS

Forever the fountain of common hopes and kindly
sympathies;
Indian and Negro, Saxon and Celt, Teuton and Latin
and Gaul,
Mere surface shadow and sunshine, while the sound-
ing unifies all!
One love, one hope, one duty theirs! No matter the
time or ken,
There never was separate heart-beat in all the races
of men!

But alien is one — of class, not race — he has drawn
the line for himself;
His roots drink life from inhuman soil, from garbage
of pomp and pelf;
His heart beats not with the common beat, he has
changed his life-stream's hue;
He deems his flesh to be finer flesh, he boasts that his
blood is blue:
Patrician, aristocrat, tory — whatever his age or name,
To the people's rights and liberties a traitor ever the
same.
The natural crowd is a mob to him, their prayer a
vulgar rhyme;
The freeman's speech is sedition, and the patriot's
deed a crime.
Wherever the race, the law, the land, whatever the
time or throne,
The tory is always a traitor to every class but his own.

CRISPUS ATTUCKS

Thank God for a land where pride is clipped, where
arrogance stalks apart;
Where law and song and loathing of wrong are words
of the common heart;
Where the masses honor straightforward strength, and
know when veins are bled,
That the bluest blood is putrid blood, that the people's
blood is red!

And honor to Crispus Attucks, who was leader and
voice that day;
The first to defy, and the first to die, with Maverick,
Carr, and Gray.
Call it riot or revolution, or mob or crowd, as you may,
Such deaths have been seed of nations, such lives
shall be honored for ay.
They were lawless hinds to the lackeys, but martyrs
to Paul Revere;
And Otis and Hancock and Warren read spirit and
meaning clear.

Ye teachers, answer: what shall be done when just
men stand in the dock;
When the caitiff is robed in ermine, and his sworders
keep the lock;
When law is a satrap's menace, and order the drill of
a horde —
Shall the people kneel to be trampled, and bare their
neck to the sword?

CRISPUS ATTUCKS

Not so! by this stone of resistance that Boston raises
here!

By the old North Church's lantern, and the watching
of Paul Revere!

Not so! by Paris of Ninety-three and Ulster of Ninety-
eight!

By Toussaint in St. Domingo! by the horror of Delhi's
gate!

By Adam's word to Hutchinson! by the tea that is
brewing still!

By the farmers that met the soldiers at Concord and
Bunker Hill!

There is never a legal sin but grows to the law's
disaster,

The master shall drop the whip, and the slave shall
enslave the master;

There is only one thing changeless: the earth steals
from under our feet,

The times and manners are passing moods, and the
laws are incomplete;

There is only one thing changes not, one word that
still survives —

The slave is the man who wields the lash, and not the
man in gyves!

O, Planter of seed in thought and deed has the year
of right revolved,

And brought the negro patriot's cause with its prob-
lem to be solved?

CRISPUS ATTUCKS

His blood streamed first for the building, and through
all the century's years,
Our growth of story and fame of glory are mixed with
his blood and tears.
He lived with men like a soul condemned — derided,
defamed, and mute;
Debased to the brutal level, and instructed to be a brute.
His virtue was shorn of benefit, his industry of
reward;
His love! — O men, it were mercy to have cut affec-
tion's cord;
Through the night of his woe, no pity save that of
his fellow slave;
For the wage of his priceless labor, the scourging block
and the grave!

Oh, we who have toiled for freedom's law, have we
sought for freedom's soul?
Have we learned at last that human right is not a
part but the whole?
That nothing is told while the clinging sin remains
half-unconfessed?
That the health of the nation is periled if one man be
oppressed?

Has he learned — the slave from the rice swamps,
whose children were sold — has he
With broken chains on his limbs and the cry in his
blood, "I am free!"

CRISPUS ATTUCKS

Has he learned through affliction's teaching what our
Crispus Attucks knew —
When Right is stricken, the white and black are
counted as one, not two?
Has he learned that his century of grief was worth a
thousand years
In blending his life and blood with ours, and that all
his toils and tears
Were heaped and poured on him suddenly, to give him
a right to stand
From the gloom of African forests in the blaze of the
freest land?
That his hundred years have earned for him a place
in the human van
Which others have fought for and thought for since
the world of wrong began?

For this shall his vengeance change to love, and his
retribution burn
Defending the right, the weak, and the poor, when each
shall have his turn;
For this shall he set his woful past afloat on the stream
of night;
For this he forgets, as we all forget, when darkness
turns to light;
For this he forgives, as we all forgive, when wrong has
turned to right.

LIVING

To toil all day and lie worn-out at night;
To rise for all the years to slave and sleep,
And breed new broods to do no other thing
In toiling, bearing, breeding — life is this
To myriad men, too base for man or brute.

To serve for common duty, while the brain
Is hot with high desire to be distinct;
To fill the sand-grain place among the stones
That build the social wall in million sameness,
Is life by leave, and death by insignificance.

To live the morbid years, with dripping blood
Of sacrificial labor for a Thought;
To take the dearest hope and lay it down
Beneath the crushing wheels for love of Freedom;
To bear the sordid jeers of cant and trade,
And go on hewing for a far ideal, —
This were a life worth giving to a cause,
If cause be found so worth a martyr life.

But highest life of man, nor work nor sacrifice,
But utter seeing of the things that be!
To pass amid the hurrying crowds, and watch
The hungry race for things of vulgar use;

LIVING

To mark the growth of baser lines in men;
To note the bending to a servile rule;
To know the natural discord called disease
That rots like rust the blood and souls of men;

To test the wisdoms and philosophies by touch
Of that which is immutable, being clear,
The beam God opens to the poet's brain;
To see with eyes of pity laboring souls
Strive upward to the Freedom and the Truth,
And still be backward dragged by fear and ignorance;
To see the beauty of the world and hear
The rising harmony of growth, whose shade
Of undertone is harmonized decay;
To know that love is life — that blood is one
And rushes to the union — that the heart
Is like a cup athirst for wine of love;
Who sees and feels this meaning utterly,
The wrong of law, the right of man, the natural truth,
Partaking not of selfish aims, withholding not
The word that strengthens and the hand that helps;
Who waits and sympathizes with the pettiest life,
And loves all things, and reaches up to God
With thanks and blessing — he alone is living.

THE RIDE OF COLLINS GRAVES

AN INCIDENT OF THE FLOOD IN MASSACHUSETTS
ON MAY 16, 1874

NO song of a soldier riding down
To the raging fight from Winchester town;
No song of a time that shook the earth
With the nation's throe at a nation's birth;
But the song of a brave man, free from fear
As Sheridan's self or Paul Revere;
Who risked what they risked, free from strife,
And its promise of glorious pay — his life!

The peaceful valley has waked and stirred,
And the answering echoes of life are heard;
The dew still clings to the trees and grass,
And the early toilers smiling pass,
As they glance aside at the white-walled homes,
Or up the valley, where merrily comes
The brook that sparkles in diamond rills
As the sun comes over the Hampshire hills.

What was it that passed like an ominous breath —
Like a shiver of fear, or a touch of death?
What was it? The valley is peaceful still,
And the leaves are afire on top of the hill.

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THE RIDE OF COLLINS GRAVES

It was not a sound, nor a thing of sense,
But a pain, like the pang of the short suspense
That thrills the being of those who see
At their feet the gulf of Eternity!

The air of the valley has felt the chill;
The workers pause at the door of the mill;
The housewife, keen to the shivering air,
Arrests her foot on the cottage stair,
Instinctive taught by the mother-love,
And thinks of the sleeping ones above.

Why start the listeners? Why does the course
Of the mill-stream widen? Is it a horse —
Hark to the sound of his hoofs, they say —
That gallops so wildly Williamsburg way!

God! what was that, like a human shriek,
From the winding valley? Will nobody speak?
Will nobody answer those women who cry
As the awful warnings thunder by?

Whence come they? Listen! And now they hear
The sound of the galloping horsehoofs near;
They watch the trend of the vale and see
The rider who thunders so menacingly,
With waving arms and warning scream,
To the home-filled banks of the valley stream.
He draws no rein, but he shakes the street

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THE RIDE OF COLLINS GRAVES

With a shout and the ring of the galloping feet;
And this the cry he flings to the wind:
"To the hills for your lives! The flood is behind!"

He cries and is gone, but they know the worst —
The breast of the Williamsburg dam has burst!
The basin that nourished their happy homes
Is changed to a demon — It comes! it comes!

A monster in aspect, with shaggy front
Of shattered dwellings, to take the brunt
Of the homes they shatter, white-maned and hoarse,
The merciless Terror fills the course
Of the narrow valley, and rushing raves,
With death on the first of its hissing waves,
Till cottage and street and crowded mill
Are crumbled and crushed.

But onward still,
In front of the roaring flood, is heard
The galloping horse and the warning word.
Thank God! the brave man's life is spared!
From Williamsburg town he nobly dared
To race with the flood and take the road
In front of the terrible swath it mowed.

For miles it thundered and crashed behind;
But he looked ahead with a steadfast mind,
"They must be warned!" was all he said,
As away on his terrible ride he sped.

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THE RIDE OF COLLINS GRAVES

When heroes are called for, bring the crown
To this Yankee rider; send him down
On the stream of time with the Curtius old;
His deed, as the Roman's, was brave and bold,
And the tale can as noble a thrill awake,
For he offered his life for the people's sake.

HIDDEN SINS

FOR every sin that comes before the light,
And leaves an outward blemish on the soul,
How many, darker, cower out of sight,
And burrow, blind and silent, like the mole.
And like the mole, too, with its busy feet
That dig and dig a never-ending cave,
Our hidden sins gnaw through the soul, and meet
And feast upon each other in its grave.

A buried sin is like a covered sore
That spreads and festers 'neath a painted face;
And no man's art can heal it evermore,
But only His — the Surgeon's — promised grace.
Who hides a sin is like the hunter who
Once warmed a frozen adder with his breath,
And when he placed it near his heart it flew
With poisoned fangs and stung that heart to death.

A sculptor once a granite statue made,
One-sided only, just to fit its place:
The unseen side was monstrous; so men shade
Their evil acts behind a smiling face.
O blind! O foolish! thus our sins to hide,
And force our pleading hearts the gall to sip;
O cowards! who must eat the myrrh, that Pride
May smile like Virtue with a lying lip.

HIDDEN SINS

A sin admitted is nigh half-atoned;
And while the fault is red and freshly done,
If we but drop our eyes and think, — 'tis owned, —
 'Tis half-forgiven, half the crown is won.
But if we heedless let it reek and rot,
 Then pile a mountain on its grave, and turn,
With smiles to all the world, that tainted spot
 Beneath the mound will never cease to burn.

BONE AND SINEW AND BRAIN

YE white-maned waves of the Western Sea,
That ride and roll to the strand,
Ye strong-winged birds, never forced alee
By the gales that sweep toward land,
Ye are symbols of death, and of hope that saves,
As ye swoop in your strength and grace,
As ye roll to the land like the billowed graves
Of a past and puerile race.

Cry, "Presto, changel!" and the lout is lord,
With his vulgar blood turned blue;
Go dub your knight with a slap of a sword,
As the kings in Europe do;
Go grade the lines of your social mode
As you grade the palace wall, —
The people forever to bear the load,
And the gilded vanes o'er all.

But the human blocks will not lie as still
As the dull foundation stones,
But will rise, like a sea, with an awful will,
And ingulf the golden thrones;
For the days are gone when a special race
Took the place of the gilded vane,
And the merit that mounts to the highest place
Must have bone and sinew and brain.

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BONE AND SINEW AND BRAIN

Let the cant of the "march of mind" be heard,
Of the time to come, when man
Shall lose the mark of his brawn and beard
In the future's leveling plan:
'Tis the dream of a mind effeminate,
The whine for an easy crown;
There is no need for the good and great
In the weakling's leveling down.

A nation's boast is a nation's bone,
As well as its might of mind;
And the culture of either of these alone
Is the doom of a nation signed.
But the cant of the ultra-suasion school
Unsinews the hand and thigh,
And preaches the creed of the weak to rule,
And the strong to struggle and die.

Our schools are spurred to the fatal race,
As if health were the nation's sin,
Till the head grows large, and the vampire face
Is gorged on the limbs so thin.
Our women have entered the abstract fields,
And avaunt with the child and home:
While the rind of science a pleasure yields
Shall they care for the lives to come?
And they ape the manners of manly times
In their sterile and worthless life,
Till the man of the future augments his crimes
With a raid for a Sabine wife.

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BONE AND SINEW AND BRAIN

Ho, white-maned waves of the Western Sea,
That ride and roll to the strand!
Ho, strong-winged birds, never blown alee
By the gales that sweep toward land!
Ye are symbols both of a hope that saves,
As ye swoop in your strength and grace,
As ye roll to the land like the billowed graves
Of a suicidal race.
Ye have hoarded your strength in equal parts;
For the men of the future reign
Must have faithful souls and kindly hearts,
And bone and sinew and brain.

*Steer straight as the wind will allow, but be ready
To veer just a point to let travelers pass:
Each sees his own star — a stiff course is too steady
When this one to Meeting goes, that one to Mass.
Our stream's not so wide but two arches may span it —
Good neighbor and citizen; these for a code,
And this truth in sight, — every man on the planet
Has just as much right as yourself to the road.*

*Stand erect in the vale, nor exult on the mountain;
Take gifts with a sigh — most men give to be paid;
“I had” is a heartache, “I have” is a fountain, —
You're worth what you saved, not the millions you made.
Trust toil, not intent, or your plans will miscarry;
Your wife keep a sweetheart, instead of a tease;
Rule children by reason, not rod; and, mind, marry
Your girl when you can — and your boy when you please.*

VIGNETTES

HER hair was a waving bronze, and her eyes
Deep wells that might cover a brooding soul;
And who, till he weighed it, could ever surmise
That her heart was a cinder instead of a coal!

A sculptor is Deming — a great man, too;
But the chisel of fancy the hand outstrips;
While he talks of the wonder he's going to do
All the work of his fingers leaks out at his lips!

“A scholar, sir! To Brown six tongues are
known!”
(The blockhead never spoke one thought his
own!)

An honest man! Jones never broke the law.
The wretch behind the bars he scorned with pride.
But these same bars on every side he saw:
Jones lived in prison — on the other side.

At school a blockhead, sullen, wordless, dull;
His size well known to even his smallest mate;
Grown up, men say: “How silent! He is full
Of will and wisdom!” Truly mud is great!

VIGNETTES

A man will trust another man and show
His secret thought and act, as if he must;
A woman — does she tell her sins? Ah, no!
She never knew a woman she could trust.

The world is large when its weary leagues
Two loving hearts divide;
But the world is small when your enemy
Is loose on the other side.

“You gave me the key of your heart, my love;
Then why do you make me knock?”
“Oh, that was yesterday, Saints above!
And last night — I changed the lock!”

When men possess one secret or one creed,
Or love one land or struggle for one need,
They draw together brotherly and human —
They only fly apart who love one woman.

DESTINY

SOLDIER, why do you shrink from the hiss of the
hungry lead?

The bullet that whizzed is past; the approaching ball
is dumb.

Stand straight! You cannot shrink from Fate: let it
come!

A comrade in front may hear it whiz — when you are
dead.

*Love is the secret of the world,
The cup we drain and still desire to drink.
The loadstone bungers for the steel; the steel,
Inert amid a million stones, responds to this.
So yearn and answer hearts that truly love:
Once touch their life-spring, it vibrates to death;
And twain atbrill as one are nature-wed.*

THE SELFLESS LOVE ¹

AH, myrrh and honey!" spake a third, whose eyes
Were deep with sorrow for the woe; "blind
hands

That grope for flowers and pierce the flesh with thorns!
All love of woman still may turn to hate,
As wine to bitterness, as noon to night.
But sweeter far and deeper than the love
Of flesh for flesh is the strong bond of hearts
For suffering Motherland — to make her free!

Love's joy is short and Hate's black triumph bitter,
And loves and hates are selfish, save for thee,
O chained and weeping at thy pillars' foot,
Thy white flesh eaten by accursed bands.
No love but thine can satisfy the heart,
For love of thee holds in it hate of wrong,
And shapes the hope that molds humanity!
Who loves a greater sinks all lesser love,
Who hates a tyrant loses lesser hate.

My Land! I see thee in the marble, bowed
Before thy tyrant, bound at foot and wrist —
Thy garments rent — thy wounded shoulder bare —
Thy chained hand raised to ward the cruel blow —

¹ From "The Statues in the Block."

THE SELFLESS LOVE

My poor love round thee scarf-like, weak to hide
And powerless to shield thee; but a boy
I wound it round thee, dearest, and a man
I drew it close and kissed thee — Mother, wife!
For thee the past and future days; for thee
The will to trample wrong and strike for slaves;
For thee the hope that ere mine arm be weak
And ere my heart be dry may close the strife
In which thy colors may be borne through fire,
And all thy griefs washed out in manly blood,
And I shall see thee crowned and bound with love,
Thy strong sons round thee guarding thee. O star
That lightens desolation, o'er her beam,
Nor let the shadow of the pillar sink
Too deep within her, till the dawn is red
Of that white noon when men shall call her Queen!"

SONGS THAT ARE NOT SUNG

DO not praise: a smile is payment more than meet
for what is done;

Who shall paint the mote's glad raiment floating in
the molten sun?

Nay, nor smile, for blind the eyesight, ears may hear
not, lips are dumb;

From the silence, from the twilight, wordless but
complete they come.

Songs were born before the singer: like white souls
awaiting birth.

They abide the chosen bringer of their melody to
earth.

Deep the pain of our demerit: strings so rude or rudely
strung,

Dull to every pleading spirit seeking speech but sent
unsung;

Round our hearts with gentle breathing still the
plaintive silence plays,

But we brush away its wreathing, filled with cares of
common days.

Ever thinking of the morrow, burdened down with
cares and needs,

Once or twice, mayhap, in sorrow, we may hear the
song that pleads;

SONGS THAT ARE NOT SUNG

Once or twice a dreaming poet sees the beauty as
it flies,
But his vision, who shall know it, who shall read it
from his eyes?
Voiceless he, — his necromancy fails to cage the
wondrous bird;
Lure and snare are vain when fancy flies like echo
from a word.
Only some time he may sing it, using speech as 'twere
a bell,
Not to read the song but ring it, like the sea-tone from
a shell.
Sometimes, too, it comes and lingers round the strings
all still and mute,
Till some lover's trembling fingers draw it living from
the lute.
Still, our best is but a vision which a lightning-flash
illumes,
Just a gleam of life elysian flung across the voiceless
glooms.

Why should gleams perplex and move us? Must the
soul still upward grow
To the beauty far above us and the songs no sense
may know?

THE LURE

WHAT bait do you use," said a Saint to the
Devil,
"When you fish where the souls of men abound?"
"Well, for special tastes," said the King of Evil,
"Gold and Fame are the best I've found."
"But for common use?" asked the Saint. "Ah, then,"
Said the Demon, "I angle for Man, not men,
And a thing I hate
Is to change my bait,
So I fish with a woman the whole year round."

*Let be what is; why should we strive and wrestle
With awkward skill against a subtle doubt ?
Or pin a mystery 'neath our puny pestle
And vainly try to bray its secret out ?*

*The throbbing brain will burst its tender raiment
With fickle force, to see by finite light
How man's brief earning and eternal payment
Are weighed as equal in th' Infinite sight.*

*The Lord knows best; He gave us thirst for learning;
And deepest knowledge of His work betrays
No thirst left waterless. Shall our soul-yearning
Apart from all things, be a quenchless blaze ?*

WHEAT GRAINS

AS grains from chaff, I sift these worldly rules,
Kernels of wisdom, from the husks of schools:

I

Benevolence befits the wisest mind;
But he who has not studied to be kind,
Who grants for asking, gives without a rule,
Hurts whom he helps, and proves himself a fool.

II

The wise man is sincere; but he who tries
To be sincere, haphazard, is not wise.

III

Knowledge is gold to him who can discern
That he who loves to know must love to learn.

IV

Straightforward speech is very certain good;
But he who has not learned its rule is rude.

WHEAT GRAINS

V

Boldness and firmness, these are virtues each,
Noble in action, excellent in speech.
But who is bold, without considerate skill,
Rashly rebels, and has no law but will;
While he called firm, illiterate and crass,
With mulish stubbornness obstructs the pass.

VI

The mean of soul are sure their faults to gloss,
And find a secret gain in others' loss.

VII

Applause the bold man wins, respect the grave;
Some, only being *not* modest, think they're brave.

VIII

The petty wrongdoer may escape unseen;
But what from sight the moon eclipsed shall screen?
Superior minds must err in sight of men,
Their eclipse o'er, they rule the world again.

IX

Temptation waits for all, and ills will come;
But some go out and ask the devil home.

WHEAT GRAINS

X

"I love God," said the saint. God spake above:
"Who loveth me must love those whom I love."
"I scourge myself," the hermit cried. God spake:
"Kindness is prayer but not a self-made ache."

XI

Wise men use days as husbandmen use bees,
And steal rich drops from every pregnant hour;
Others, like wasps on blossomed apple trees,
Find gall, not honey, in the sweetest flower.

*While slept the right, and reigned the dual wrong,
Unchanged, unchecked, for half a thousand years,
In tears of blood we cried, "O Lord, how long?"
And even God seemed deaf to Erin's tears.*

*But when she lay all weak and bruised and broken,
Her white limbs seared with cruel chain and thorn —
As bursts the cloud, the lightning word was spoken,
God's seed took root — His crop of men was born !*

*With one deep breath began the land's progression,
On every field the seeds of freedom fell:
Burke, Grattan, Flood, and Curran in the session,
Fitzgerald, Sbeares, and Emmet in the cell !*

*Such teachers soon aroused the dormant nation,
Such sacrifice insured the endless fight;
The voice of Grattan smote wrong's domination,
The death of Emmet sealed the cause of right !*

EMMET'S GRAVE

"When my country takes her place among the nations of the earth, then, and not till then, let my epitaph be written."

Speech of Robert Emmet in the Dock.

SWEET is the love of a woman, and sweet is the
kiss of a child;

Sweet is the tender strength, and the bravery of the
mild;

But sweeter than all, for embracing all, is the young
life's peerless price —

The young heart laid on the altar, as a nation's sacrifice.

Flushed with the pride of genius, filled with the
strength of life,

Thrilled with delicious passion for her who would be
his wife —

This was the heart he offered, the upright life he gave;

This is the silent sermon of the patriot's nameless
grave.

Shrine of a nation's honor, stone left blank for a name,
Light on the dark horizon to guide us clear from
shame,

Chord struck deep with the keynote, telling us what
can save

"A nation among the nations," or forever a nameless
grave.

EMMET'S GRAVE

He teaches the secret of manhood, the watchword of
those who aspire,
That men must follow freedom, though it lead through
blood and fire;
That sacrifice is the bitter draught which freemen
still must quaff;
That every patriotic life is the patriot's epitaph.

Richest of gifts to a nation! Death with the living
crown!
Type of ideal manhood to the people's heart brought
down!
Font of the hopes we cherish — test of the things we
do;
Gorgon's face for the traitor — talisman for the true!

MY LITTLE DAUGHTER

I TOLD her a story, a fairy story,
My little daughter with eyes of blue,
And with clear wide gaze as the splendors brightened,
She always asked me, "Oh, is it true?"

Always that word when the wonder reached her,
The pictured beauty so grand and new;
When the good were paid and the evil punished,
Still, with soft insistence, "Oh, is it true?"

Ah, late, drear knowledge from sin and sorrow,
How will you answer and answer true,
Her wistful doubt of the happy ending?
Wise child! I wondered how much she knew.

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— *And I know*
That when God gives to us the clearest sight,
He does not touch our eyes with love, but sorrow.

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A NATION'S TEST ¹

I

A NATION'S greatness lies in men, not acres;
One master-mind is worth a million hands.
No royal robes have marked the planet-shakers,
But Samson-strength to burst the ages' bands.
The might of empire gives no crown supernal,
Athens is here — but where is Macedon?
A dozen lives make Greece and Rome eternal
And England's fame might safely rest on one.

Here test and text are drawn from Nature's preaching:
Africa, Asia — half the rounded earth —
In teeming lives the solemn truth are teaching,
That insect-millions may have human birth.
Sun-kissed and fruitful, every clod is breeding
A petty life, too small to reach the eye:
So must it be, with no man thinking, leading,
The generations creep their course and die.

Hapless the lands, and doomed amid the races,
That give no answer to this royal test;
Their toiling tribes will droop ignoble faces,
Till earth in pity takes them back to rest.

¹ Written for the O'Connell Centennial, 1875.

A NATION'S TEST

A vast monotony may not be evil,
But God's light tells us it cannot be good;
Valley and hill have beauty — but the level
Must bear a shadeless and a stagnant brood.

II

I bring the touchstone, Motherland, to thee,
And test thee trembling, fearing thou shouldst fail;
If fruitless, sonless, thou wert proved to be,
Ah, what would love and memory avail?

Brave land! God has blest thee!
Thy strong heart I feel,
As I touch thee and test thee —
Dear land! As the steel
To the magnet flies upward, so rises thy breast,
With a motherly pride to the touch of the test.

III

See! she smiles beneath the touchstone, looking on
her distant youth,
Looking down her line of leaders and of workers for
the truth.
Ere the Teuton, Norseman, Briton, left the primal
woodland spring,
When their rule was might and rapine, and their law
a painted king;
When the sun of art and learning still was in the Orient;

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A NATION'S TEST

When the pride of Babylonia under Cyrus' hand was
spent;
When the sphinx's introverted eye turned fresh from
Egypt's guilt;
When the Persian bowed to Athens; when the Par-
thenon was built;
When the Macedonian climax closed the common-
wealths of Greece;
When the wrath of Roman manhood burst on Tarquin
for Lucrece —
Then was Erin rich in knowledge, thence from out
her Ollamh's store,
Kenned to-day by students only, grew her ancient
Senchus More;
Then were reared her mighty builders, who made
temples to the sun —
There they stand, the old Round Towers, showing
how their work was done;
Thrice a thousand years upon them, shaming all our
later art,
Warning fingers raised to tell us we must build with
rev'rent heart.

Ah, we call thee Mother Erin! Mother thou in right
of years;
Mother in the large fruition, mother in the joys and
tears.
All thy life has been a symbol — we can only read a
part:

A NATION'S TEST

God will flood thee yet with sunshine for the woes that
drench thy heart.
All thy life has been symbolic of a human mother's
life;
Youth's sweet hopes and dreams have vanished and
the travail and the strife
Are upon thee in the present; but thy work until
to-day
Still has been for truth and manhood, and it shall
not pass away.
Justice lives though judgment lingers — angels' feet
are heavy shod —
But a planet's years are moments in th' eternal day
of God!

IV

Out from the valley of death and tears,
From the war and want of a thousand years,
From the mark of sword and the rust of chain,
From the smoke and blood of the penal laws,
The Irishmen and the Irish cause
Come out in the front of the field again!

What says the stranger to such a vitality?
What says the statesman to this nationality?
Flung on the shore of a sea of defeat,
Hardly the swimmers have sprung to their feet,
When the nations are thrilled by a clarion word,
And Burke, the philosopher-statesman, is heard.

A NATION'S TEST

When shall his equal be? Down from the stellar height
Sees he the planet and all on its girth —
India, Columbia, and Europe — his eagle sight
Sweeps at a glance all the wrong upon earth.
Races or sects were to him a profanity:
Hindoo and Negro and Kelt were as one;
Large as mankind was his splendid humanity,
Large in its record the work he has done.

v

What need to mention men of minor note,
When there be minds that all the heights attain?
What schoolboy knoweth not the hand that wrote
"Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain?"
What man that speaketh English e'er can lift
His voice 'mid scholars, who hath missed the lore
Of Berkeley, Curran, Sheridan, and Swift,
The art of Foley and the songs of Moore?
Grattan and Flood and Emmet — where is he
That hath not learned respect for such as these?
Who loveth humor and hath yet to see
Lover and Prout and Lever and Maclise?

vi

Great men grow greater by the lapse of time:
We know those least whom we have seen the latest;
And they, 'mongst those whose names have grown
sublime,
Who worked for human liberty, are greatest.

A NATION'S TEST

And now for one who allied will to work,
And thought to act and burning speech to thought;
Who gained the prizes that were seen by Burke;
Burke felt the wrong — O'Connell felt, and fought.

Ever the same, from boyhood up to death
His race was crushed, his people were defamed;
He found the spark, and fanned it with his breath,
And fed the fire till all the nation flamed!

He roused the farms, he made the serf a yeoman;
He drilled his millions and he faced the foe;
But not with lead or steel he struck the foeman:
Reason the sword, and human right the blow.

He fought for home, but no land-limit bounded
O'Connell's faith, nor curbed his sympathies;
All wrong to liberty must be confounded,
Till men were chainless as the winds and seas.

He fought for faith, but with no narrow spirit;
With ceaseless hand the bigot laws he smote;
One chart, he said, all mankind should inherit, —
The right to worship and the right to vote.

Always the same, but yet a glinting prism
In wit, law, statecraft, still a master-hand;
An "uncrowned king," whose people's love was chrism;
His title — Liberator of his Land!

A NATION'S TEST

"His heart's in Rome, his spirit is in heaven" —
So runs the old song that his people sing;
A tall Round Tower they builided in Glasnevin —
Fit Irish headstone for an Irish king!

VII

O Motherland! there is no cause to doubt thee;
Thy mark is left on every shore to-day,
Though grief and wrong may cling like robes about
thee,
Thy motherhood will keep thee queen alway.
In faith and patience working, and believing
Not power alone can make a noble state;
Whate'er the land, though all things else conceiving,
Unless it breed great men, it is not great.
Go on, dear land, and midst the generations
Send out strong men to cry the word aloud;
Thy niche is empty still amidst the nations —
Go on in faith, and God must raise the cloud.

*It is mud that unites, but the sand is free — aye, every grain is free,
And the freedom of individual men is'the highest of liberty.*

*It is mud that coheres, but the sand is free, till the lightning smite
the shore
And smelt the grains to a crystal mass, to return to sand no more.*

*Then drink, all her sons — be we Keltic or Danish,
Or Norman or Saxon — one mantle was o'er us;
Let race lines, and creed lines, and every line vanish —
We drink as the Gael: "To the Mother that bore us!"*

ERIN

*Island of Destiny! Innisfail! for thy faith is the payment near!
The mine of the future is opened, and the golden veins appear.
Thy bands are white and thy page unstained.
Reach out for thy glorious years,
And take them from God as his recompense for thy fortitude and
tears.*

WHAT need of new hero, with Brian? or preacher,
With Patrick? or soldier, with Conn?
With her dark Ollamh Fohla, what need of a teacher,
Sage, ruler, and builder in one?

What need of new lovers, with Deirdre and Imer?
With wonders and visions and elves
Sure no need at all has romancer or rhymer,
When the fairies belong to ourselves.

What need of new tongues? Oh, the Gaelic is clearest,
Like Nature's own voice every word;
"Abagur! Acusbla! Savourneen!" the dearest
The ear of a girl ever heard.

They may talk of new causes! *Dbar Dbia!* our old
one
Is fresher than ever today;
Like Erin's green sod that is steaming to God
The blood it has drunk in the fray.

ERIN

Through ages of warfare and famine and prison
Her voice and her spirit were free;
But the longest night ends, and her name has uprisen,
The sunburst is red on the sea!

“O Bride of ‘the Sea! may the world know your
 laughter
As well as it knows your tears!
As your past was for Freedom, so be your hereafter,
Undimmed through the glad coming years!”

What need of new songs? When his country is singing,
What word has the poet to say,
But to drink her a toast while the joy-bells are ringing
The dawn of her opening day?

JOHN MITCHEL ¹

I

DEAD — but the death was fitting:
His life, to the latest breath,
Was poured like wax on the chart of right,
And is sealed by the stamp of Death!

Oh for a tongue to utter
The words that should be said —
Of his worth that was silver, living,
That is gold and jasper, dead!

II

Weep for him, Ireland, mother lonely;
Weep for the son who died for thee.
Wayward he was, but he loved thee only,
Loyal and fearless as son could be.
Weep for him, Ireland — sorrowing nation
Faithful to all who are true to thee:
Never a son in thy desolation
Had holier love for thy cause than he.

¹ Died March 20, 1875.

JOHN MITCHEL

Sons of the Old Land, mark the story —
Mother and son in the final test:
Weeping she sits in her darkened glory,
Holding her dead to her stricken breast.
Only the dead on her knees are lying —
Ah, poor mother beneath the cross!
Strength is won by the constant trying,
Crowns are gemmed by the tears of loss!

Sons of the Old Land, mark the story —
Mother and son to each other true:
She called, and he answered, old and hoary,
And gave her his life as a man should do.
She may weep — but for us no weeping;
Tears are vain till the work is done:
Tears for her — but for us the keeping
Our hearts as true as her faithful son.

TO-DAY

ONLY from day to day
The life of a wise man runs.
What matter if seasons far away
Have gloom or have double suns?
To climb the unreal path,
We stray from the roadway here;
We swim the rivers of wrath,
And tunnel the hills of fear.

Our feet on the torrent's brink,
Our eyes on the clouds afar,
We fear the things we think
Instead of the things that are.

Like a tide our work should rise —
Each later wave the best;
To-day is a king in disguise,
To-day is the special test.

Like a sawyer's work is life:
The present makes the flaw,
And the only field for strife
Is the inch before the saw.

TO A. S., ON HIS DAUGHTER'S WEDDING

THERE is no joy all set apart from pain,
The opening bud has loss as well as gain.
The brightest dewdrop gems a bending flower,
The rarest day has wept one little shower;
But wholly blest the parting pain and ruth
That hold and fold the joining love of youth.

TO A. S. ON HIS SILVER WEDDING

NOT many friends
Wish I you;
Love makes amends
For the few.

Slight bonds are best
For the new;
Here is the test
Of the true:

Pay to your friend
Your own due;
Love to the end
Through and through;
Let him commend,
And not you.

Friends of this kind,
Tried and true
May you, friend, find —
Just a few.

*O things symbolic ! Things that mock our vense —
Our five-fold, pitiable sense — and say
A thousand senses could not show one day
As sight infinite sees it; fruitful clay,
And budding bough, and Nature great with child
And chill with doom and death. Is all so dense
That our dull thought can never read thy words,
Or sweep with knowing hand thy hidden chords.*

*Have men not fallen from fair heights, once trod
By nobler minds, who saw the works of God,
The flowers and living things, still undefiled,
And spoke one language with them ? And can we
In countless generations, each more pure
Than that preceding, come at last to see
Thy symbols full of meaning, and be sure
That what we read is all they have to tell ?*

*O moaning sea of life ! the few who dive
Beneath thy waters, faint and short of breath
Not Dante-like, who cannot swim in death
And view its secrets, but must swiftly rise,
They meet the light with introverted eyes,
And hands that clutch a few dim mysteries !*

MY MOTHER'S MEMORY

THERE is one bright star in heaven
Ever shining in my night;
God to me one guide has given,
Like the sailor's beacon-light,
Set on every shoal and danger,
Sending out its warning ray
To the homebound weary stranger
Looking for the landlocked bay.
In my farthest, wildest wanderings
I have turned me to that love,
As a diver, 'neath the water,
Turns to watch the light above.

THE RAINBOW'S TREASURE

WHERE the foot of the rainbow meets the field,
And the grass resplendent grows,
The earth will a precious treasure yield,
So the olden story goes.
In a crystal cup are the diamonds piled
For him who can swiftly chase,
Over torrent and desert and precipice wild,
To the rainbow's wandering base.

There were two in the field at work one day,
Two brothers, who blithely sung,
When across their valley's deep-winding way
The glorious arch was flung!
And one saw naught but a sign of rain,
And feared for his sheaves unbound;
And one is away, over mountain and plain,
Till the mystical treasure is found!

Through forest and stream, in a blissful dream,
The rainbow lured him on;
With a siren's guile it loitered awhile,
Then leagues away was gone.
Over brake and brier he followed fleet;
The people scoffed as he passed;
But in thirst and heat, and with wounded feet,
He nears the prize at last.

THE RAINBOW'S TREASURE

It is closer and closer — he wins the race —
One strain for the goal in sight:
Its radiance falls on his yearning face,
The blended colors unite!
He laves his brow in the iris beam,
He reaches — Ah woe! the sound
From the misty gulf where he ends his dream,
And the crystal cup is found!

'Tis the old, old story; one man will read
His lesson of toil in the sky;
While another is blind to the present need,
But sees with the spirit's eye.
You may grind their souls in the self-same mill,
You may bind them, heart and brow;
But the poet will follow the rainbow still,
And his brother will follow the plow.

AN ART MASTER

HE gathered cherry-stones, and carved them quaintly
Into fine semblances of flies and flowers;
With subtle skill he even imaged faintly
The forms of tiny maids and ivied towers.

His little blocks he loved to file and polish;
But ampler means he asked not, but despised.
All art but cherry-stones he would abolish,
For then his genius would be rightly prized.

For such rude hands as dealt with wrongs and passions
And throbbing hearts, he had a pitying smile;
Serene his way through surging years and fashions,
While Heaven gave him his cherry-stones and file!

CONSCIENCE

I CARE not for the outer voice
That deals out praise or blame;
I could not with the world rejoice
Nor bear its doom of shame.
But when the Voice within me speaks
The truth to me is known;
He sees himself who inward seeks —
The riches are his own.

THE PILGRIM FATHERS

ONE righteous word for Law — the common will;
One living truth of Faith — God regnant still;
One final test of Freedom — all combined;
One sacred revolution — change of mind;
One trust unfailing for the night and need —
The tyrant-flower shall cast the freedom-seed.

So held they firm, the Fathers ay to be,
From Home to Holland, Holland to the sea —
Pilgrims for manhood, in their little ship,
Hope in each heart, and prayer on every lip.
They could not live by king-made codes and creeds;
They chose the path where every footstep bleeds.
Protesting, not rebelling; scorned and banned;
Through pains and prisons harried from the land;
Through double exile, till at last they stand
Apart from all, — unique, unworldly, true,
Selected grain to sow the earth anew;
A winnowed part, a saving remnant they;
Dreamers who work, adventurers who pray!

What vision led them? Can we test their prayers?
Who knows they saw no empire in the West?
The later Puritans sought land and gold,
And all the treasures that the Spaniard told.
What line divides the Pilgrims from the rest?

THE PILGRIM FATHERS

We know them by the exile that was theirs;
Their justice, faith, and fortitude attest;
And these long years in Holland, when their band
Sought humble living in a stranger's land.
They saw their England covered with a weed
Of flaunting lordship both in court and creed.
With helpless hands they watched the error grow,
Pride on the top and impotence below;
Indulgent nobles, privileged and strong,
A haughty crew to whom all rights belong;
The bishops arrogant, the courts impure,
The rich conspirators against the poor;
The peasant scorned, the artisan despised;
The all-supporting workers lowest prized.
They marked those evils deepen year by year:
The pensions grow, the freeholds disappear,
Till England meant but monarch, prelate, peer.
At last, the Conquest! Now they know the word:
The Saxon tenant and the Norman lord!
No longer Merrie England: now it meant
The payers and the takers of the rent;
And rent exacted not from lands alone —
All rights and hopes must center in the throne:
Law-tithes for prayer—their souls were not their own!

Then o'er the brim the bitter waters welled;
The mind protested and the soul rebelled.
And yet, how deep the bowl, how slight the flow!
A few brave exiles from their country go;

THE PILGRIM FATHERS

A few strong souls whose rich affections cling,
Though cursed by clerics, hunted by the king.
Their last sad vision on the Grimsby strand
Their wives and children kneeling on the sand.

Then twelve slow years in Holland — changing years —
Strange ways of life, strange voices in their ears;
The growing children learning foreign speech;
And growing, too, within the heart of each
A thought of further exile — of a home
In some far land — a home for life and death,
By their hands built, in equity and faith.

And then the preparation — the heart-beat
Of wayfarers who may not rest their feet;
Their pastor's blessing, the farewells of some
Who stayed in Leyden. Then the sea's wide blue!
"They sailed," writ one, "and as they sailed, they
knew
That they were Pilgrims!"

On the wintry main
God flings their lives as farmers scatter grain.
His breath propels the wingéd seed afloat;
His tempests swerve to spare the fragile boat;
Before His prompting terrors disappear;
He points the way where patient seamen steer;
Till port is reached, nor North, nor South, but *Here!*

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THE PILGRIM FATHERS

Here, where the shore was rugged as the waves,
Where frozen Nature dumb and leafless lay,
And no rich meadows bade the Pilgrims stay,
Was spread the symbol of the life that saves:
To conquer first the outer things; to make
Their own advantage, unallied, unbound;
Their blood the mortar, building from the ground;
Their cares the statutes, making all anew;
To learn to trust the many, not the few;
To bend the mind to discipline; to break
The bonds of old convention, and forget
The claims and barriers of class; to face
A desert land, a strange and hostile race,
And conquer both to friendship by the debt
That Nature pays to justice, love, and toil.

Here, on this rock, and on this sterile soil,
Began the kingdom not of kings, but men;
Began the making of the world again.
Here centuries sank, and from the hither brink
A new world reached and raised an old-world link,
When English hands, by wider vision taught,
Threw down the feudal bars the Normans brought,
And here revived, in spite of sword and stake,
Their ancient freedom of the Wapentake!
Here struck the seed — the Pilgrims' roofless town,
Where equal rights and equal bonds were set;
Where all the people equal-franchised met;
Where doom was writ of privilege and crown.

THE PILGRIM FATHERS

Where human breath blew all the idols down;
Where crests were naught; where vulture flags were
furl'd,
And common men began to own the world!

All praise to others of the vanguard then!
To Spain, to France; to Baltimore and Penn;
To Jesuit, Quaker, Puritan and Priest;
Their toil be crowned, their honors be increased!
We slight no true devotion, steal no fame
From other shrines to gild the Pilgrims' name.
As time selects, we judge their treasures heaped;
Their deep foundations laid; their harvests reaped;
Their primal mode of liberty; their rules
Of civil right; their churches, courts, and schools;
Their freedom's very secret here laid down, —
The spring of government is the little town!
They knew that streams must follow to a spring;
And no stream flows from township to a king.
Give praise to others, early come or late,
For love and labor on our ship of state;
But this must stand above all fame and zeal:
The Pilgrim Fathers laid the ribs and keel.
On their strong lines we base our social health,
The man, the home, the town, the commonwealth!

Unconscious builders? Yea; the conscious fail!
Design is impotent if Nature frown.
No deathless pile has grown from intellect.

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THE PILGRIM FATHERS

Immortal things have God for architect,
And men are but the granite He lays down.
Unconscious? Yea! They thought it might avail
To build a gloomy creed about their lives,
To shut out all dissent; but naught survives
Of their poor structure; and we know to-day
Their mission was less pastoral than lay —
More nation-seed than Gospel-seed were they!

The Faith was theirs: the time had other needs.
The salt they bore must sweeten worldly deeds.
There was a meaning in the very wind
That blew them here so few, so poor, so strong,
To grapple concrete work, not abstract wrong.
Their saintly Robinson was left behind
To teach by gentle memory; to shame
The bigot spirit and the word of flame;
To write dear mercy in the Pilgrims' law;
To lead to that wide faith his soul foresaw;
That no rejected race in darkness delves;
There are no gentiles, but they make themselves;
That men are one of blood and one of spirit;
That one is as the whole, and all inherit!

On all the story of a life or race,
The blessing of a good man leaves its trace.
Their Pastor's word at Leyden here sufficed:
"But follow me as I have followed Christ!"
And, "I believe there is more truth to come!"

THE PILGRIM FATHERS

O gentle soul, what future age shall sum
The sweet incentive of thy tender word!
Thy sigh to hear of conquest by the sword:
"How happy to convert, and not to slay!"
When valiant Standish killed the chief at bay.
To such as thee the Fathers owe their fame;
The nation owes a temple to thy name.
Thy teaching made the Pilgrims kindly, free, —
All that the later Puritans should be.
Thy pious instinct marks their destiny;
Thy love won more than force, or arts adroit, —
It writ and kept the deed with Massasoit;
It earned the welcome Samoset expressed;
It lived again in Eliot's loving breast;
It filled the compact which the Pilgrims signed —
Immortal scroll! the first where men combined
From one deep lake of common blood to draw
All rulers, rights, and potencies of law.

When waves of ages have their motive spent,
Thy sermon preaches in this Monument,
Where Virtue, Courage, Law, and Learning sit;
Calm Faith above them, grasping Holy Writ;
White hand upraised o'er beauteous, trusting eyes,
And pleading finger pointing to the skies!

The past is theirs, the future ours; and we
Must learn and teach. Oh, may our record be
Like theirs, a glory, symbolized in a stone,

THE PILGRIM FATHERS

To speak, as this speaks, of our labors done.
They had no model; but they left us one.

Severe they were; but let him cast the stone
Who Christ's dear love dare measure with his own.
Their strict professions were not cant nor pride.
Who calls them narrow, let his soul be wide!
Austere, exclusive — aye, but with their faults,
Their golden probity mankind exalts.
They never lied in practise, peace, or strife;
They were no hypocrites; their faith was clear;
They feared too much some sins men ought to fear:
The lordly arrogance and avarice,
And vain frivolity's besotting vice;
The stern enthusiasm of their life
Impelled too far and weighed poor nature down;
They missed God's smile, perhaps, to watch His frown.
But he who digs for faults shall resurrect
Their manly virtues born of self-respect.
How sum their merits? They were true and brave;
They broke no compact and they owned no slave;
They had no servile order, no dumb throat;
They trusted first the universal vote;
The first were they to practise and instil
The rule of law and not the rule of will;
They lived one noble test: who would be freed
Must give up all to follow duty's lead.
They made no revolution based on blows,
But taught one truth that all the planet knows,

THE PILGRIM FATHERS

That all men think of, looking on a throne —
The people may be trusted with their own!

In every land wherever might holds sway
The Pilgrims' leaven is at work to-day.
The Mayflower's cabin was the chosen womb
Of light predestined for the nations' gloom.
God grant that those who tend the sacred flame
May worthy prove of their Forefathers' name.
More light has come, — more dangers, too, perplex:
New prides, new greeds, our high condition vex.
The Fathers fled from feudal lords and made
A freehold state; may we not retrograde
To lucre-lords and hierarchs of trade.
May we, as they did, teach in court and school
There must be classes, but no class shall rule:
The sea is sweet, and rots not like the pool.
Though vast the token of our future glory,
Though tongue of man hath not told such a story,
Surpassing Plato's dream, More's phantasy, still we
Have no new principles to keep us free.
As Nature works with changeless grain on grain,
The truths the Fathers taught we need again.
Depart from this, though we may crowd our shelves
With codes and precepts for each lapse and flaw,
And patch our moral leaks with statute law,
We cannot be protected from ourselves!
Still must we keep in every stroke and vote
The law of conscience that the Pilgrims wrote;

THE PILGRIM FATHERS

Our seal their secret: *Liberty can be;*
The State is freedom if the Town is free.
The death of nations in their work began;
They sowed the seed of federated man.
Dead nations were but robber-holds, and we
The first battalion of Humanity!
All living nations, while our eagles shine,
One after one, shall swing into our line;
Our freeborn heritage shall be the guide
And bloodless order of their regicide;
The sea shall join, not limit; mountains stand
Dividing farm from farm, not land from land.
O People's Voice! when farthest thrones shall hear;
When teachers own; when thoughtful rabbis know;
When artist minds in world-wide symbol show;
When serfs and soldiers their mute faces raise;
When priests on grand cathedral altars praise;
When pride and arrogance shall disappear,
The Pilgrims' Vision is accomplished here!

THE PRIESTS OF IRELAND¹

OH, God bless you, Priests of Ireland! You have
waited with a will,
You have waited with a purpose when you bade your
flocks be still;
And you preached from off your altars not alone the
Word Sublime,
But your silence preached to Irishmen: "Be patient;
bide your time!"
And they heard you and obeyed you, as well as out-
raged men could do —
Only some, who loved poor Ireland, but who erred in
doubting you,
Doubting you who could not tell them why you spake
the strange behest;
You, who saw the day was coming when the moral
strength was best;

¹ *Extract from the Declaration of the Bishop and Priests of the Diocese of Cloyne, Sept. 15, 1873:*

"The time has arrived when the interests of our country require from us, as priests and as Irishmen, a public pronouncement on the vital question of Home Rule. . . . We suggest the holding of a meeting in Dublin, of the representatives of all interested in this great question — and they are the entire people without distinction of creed or class — for the purpose of placing, *by constitutional means*, on a broad and definite basis the nation's demand for the restoration of its plundered rights."

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THE PRIESTS OF IRELAND

You, whose hearts were sore with looking on your
country's quick decay;
You, whose chapel seats were empty and your people
fled away;
You, who marked amid the fields where once the
peasant's cabin stood;
You, who saw your kith and kindred swell the emigra-
tion flood;
You, the *soggarth* in the famine and the helper in the
frost;
You, whose shadow was a sunshine when all other
hope was lost —
Yes, they doubted — and you knew it — but you never
said a word;
Only preached, "Be still: be patient!" and, thank
God, your voice was heard.

Now the day foreseen is breaking — it has dawned
upon the land,
And the priests still preach in Ireland: do they bid
their flocks disband?
Do they tell them still to suffer and be silent? No!
their words
Flash from Dublin Bay to Connaught, brighter than
the gleam of swords!
Flash from Donegal to Kerry, and from Waterford to
Clare,
And the nationhood, awaking, thrills the sorrow-laden
air.

THE PRIESTS OF IRELAND

Well they judged their time. They waited till the
bar was growing white,
Then they swung it on the anvil, striking down with
earnest might,
And the burning sparks that scatter lose no luster
on their way,
Till five million hearts in Ireland and ten million far
away
Feel the first good blow and answer; and they will
not rest with one.
Now the first is struck, the anvil shows the labor well
begun;
Swing them in with lusty sinew, and the work will soon
be done!

Let them sound from hoary Cashel; Kerry, Meath,
and Ross stand forth;
Let them ring from Cloyne and Tuam and the Primate
of the North.
Ask not class or creed; let "Ireland!" be the talis-
manic word;
Let the blessed sound of unity from North to South
be heard;
Carve the words: "No creed distinctions!" on O'Con-
nell's granite tomb,
And his dust will feel their meaning and rekindle in
the gloom.

THE PRIESTS OF IRELAND

Priest to priest to sound the summons, and the
answer, man to man,
With the people round the standard, and the prelates
in the van.
Let the heart of Ireland's hoping keep this golden
rule of Cloyne
Till the orange fade from Derry and the shadow from
the Boyne.
Let the words be carried outward till the farthest
lands they reach:
"After Christ, their country's freedom do the Irish
prelates preach!"

AT SCHOOL

THE bees are in the meadow,
And the swallows in the sky;
The cattle in the shadow
Watch the river running by.
The wheat is hardly stirring;
The heavy ox-team lags;
The dragon-fly is whirring
Through the yellow-blossomed flags.
And down beside the river,
Where the trees lean o'er the pool,
Where the shadows reach and quiver,
A boy has come to school.
His teachers are the swallows
And the river and the trees;
His lessons are the shallows
And the flowers and the bees.

He sees the fly-wave on the stream,
The otter steal along,
The red-gilled, slow, deep-sided bream,
He knows the mating song.
The chirping green-fly on the grass
Accepts his comrade meet;
The small gray rabbits fearless pass,
The birds light at his feet.

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A T S C H O O L

He knows not he is learning;
He thinks nor writes a word;
But in the soul discerning
A living spring is stirred.

In after years — oh, weary years!
The river's lesson, he
Will try to speak to heedless ears
In faltering minstrelsy!

— *True singers can never die;
Their life is a voice of bigger things, unseen to the common eye;
The truths and the beauties are clear to them, God's right and the
human wrong,
The heroes who die unknown, and the weak who are chained and
scourged by the strong.
And the people smile at the death-word; for the mystic voice is clear:
"The singer who lived is always alive; we hearken and always
hear."*

WRITTEN UNDER A PORTRAIT OF
KEATS

A GOD-LIKE face, with human love and will
And tender fancy traced in every line:
A god-like face, but oh, how human still!
Dear Keats, who love the gods their love is thine.

LIBERTY LIGHTING THE WORLD

MAJESTIC warder by the nation's gate,
Spike-crowned, flame-armed like Agony or Glory,
Holding the tablets of some unknown law,
With gesture eloquent and mute as Fate, —
We stand about thy feet in solemn awe,
Like desert-tribes who seek their sphinx's story,
And question thee in spirit and in speech;
What are thou? Whence? What comest thou to
teach?

What vision hold those introverted eyes
Of revolutions framed in centuries?
Thy flame — what threat, or guide for sacred way?
Thy tablet — what commandment? What Sinai?
Lo! as the waves make murmur at thy base,
We watch the somber grandeur of thy face,
And ask thee — what thou art.

I am Liberty — God's daughter!
My symbols — a law and a torch;
Not a sword to threaten slaughter,
Nor a flame to dazzle or scorch;
But a light that the world may see
And a truth that shall make men free.

I am the sister of Duty,
And I am the sister of Faith;
To-day adored for my beauty,
To-morrow led forth to death.

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LIBERTY LIGHTING THE WORLD

I am she whom ages prayed for;
Heroes suffered undismayed for;
Whom the martyrs were betrayed for!

I am Liberty! Fame of nation or praise of statute is
naught to me;
Freedom is growth and not creation: one man suffers,
one man is free.
One brain forges a constitution; but how shall the
million souls be won?
Freedom is more than a resolution — he is not free
who is free alone.

Justice is mine, and it grows by loving, changing the
world like the circling sun;
Evil recedes from the spirit's proving as mist from
the hollows when night is done.
Hither, ye blind, from your futile banding; know the
rights and the rights are won;
Wrong shall die with the understanding — one truth
clear and the work is done.
Nature is higher than Progress or Knowledge, whose
need is ninety enslaved for ten;
My word shall stand against mart and college;
The planet belongs to its living men!
And hither, ye weary ones and breathless, searching
the seas for a kindly shore,
I am Liberty! patient, deathless — set by love at the
nation's door.

THE PRICELESS THINGS

AH, the Greeks knew! Come their victors honored
from the sacred games,
Under arches red with roses, flushed to hear their
shouted names;

See their native cities take them, breach the wall to
make a gate!
What supreme reward is theirs who bring such honors
to their state?

In the forum stand they proudly, take their prizes
from the priest:
Little wreaths of pine and parsley on their naked
temples pressed!

We in later days are lower. When a manful stroke is
made,
We must raise a purse to pay it—making manliness
a trade.

But e'en here, amidst the markets, there are things
they dare not prize;
Dollars hide their sordid faces when they meet
anoointed eyes.

THE PRICELESS THINGS

Lovers do not speak with jewels — flowers alone can
plead for them;
And one fragrant memory cherished is far dearer than
a gem.

Statesmen steer the nation safely; artists pass the
burning test;
And their country pays them proudly with a ribbon
at the breast.

When the poet sings the love-song, or the song of life
and death,
Till the workers cease their toiling with abated, wonder-
ing breath;

When he gilds the mill and mine, inspires the slave
to rise and dare;
Lights with love the cheerless garret, bids the tyrant
to beware;

When he steals the pang from poverty with meanings
new and clear,
Reconciling pain and peace and bringing blissful
visions near —

His reward? Nor cross nor ribbon, but all others
high above;
They have won their glittering symbols — he has
earned the people's love.

*The Word was first, says the revelation;
Justice is older than error or strife;
The Word preceded the Incarnation
As symbol and type of law and life.*

*And always so are the mighty changes:
The word must be sown in the heart like seed;
Men's hands must tend it, their lives defend it,
Till it burst into flower as a deathless Deed.*

*The Word is great, and no Deed is greater,
When both are of God, to follow or lead;
But, alas for the truth when the Word comes later,
With questioned steps, to sustain the Deed.*

PROMETHEUS — CHRIST

GOD speaks in ordered harmony — behold!
Between us and the Darkness, clad in light, —
Between us and the curtain of the Vast, — two Forms,
And each is crowned eternally: and One
Is crowned with flowers and tender leaves and grass,
And smiles benignly; and the other One,
With sadly pitying eyes, is crowned with thorns.
O Nature and O Christ, for men to love
And seek and live by — Thine the dual reign —
The health and hope and happiness of men!
Behold our faith and fruit!

What demon laughs?

Behold our books, our schools, our states,
Where Christ and Nature are the daily word;
Behold our dealings between man and man,
Our laws for home, our treaties for abroad;
Behold our honor, honesty, and freedom,
And last, our brotherhood! For we are born
In Christian times and ruled by Christian rules!

Bah! God is mild or He would strike the world
As men would smite a liar on the mouth.
Shame on the falsehood! Let us tell the truth —
Nor Christ nor Nature rules, but Greed and Creed

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PROMETHEUS—CHRIST

And Caste and Cant and Craft and Ignorance.
Down to the dust with every decent face,
And whisper there the lies we daily live.
Oh, God forgive us! Nature never can;
For one is merciful, the other just.

Let us confess: by nations first — our lines
Are writ in blood and rapine and revenge;
Conquest and pride have motives been and law —
Christ walks with us to hourly crucifixion!

As men? Would God the better tale were here:
Atom as whole, corruption, shrewdness, self.
Freedom? A juggle — hundreds slave for one. —
That one is free, and boasts, and lo! the shame,
The hundreds at the wheel go boasting too.
Justice? The selfish only can succeed.
Success means power — did Christ mean it so?
And power must be guarded by the law,
And preachers preach that law must be obeyed,
Aye, even when Right is ironed in the dock,
And Rapine sits in ermine on the bench!
Mercy? Behold it in the reeking slums
That grow like cancers from the palace wall;
Go hear it from the conquered — how their blood
Is weighed in drops, and purchased, blood for gold;
Go ask the toiling tenant why he paid
The landlord's rent and let his children starve;
Go find the thief whose father was a thief,

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PROMETHEUS—CHRIST

And ask what Christian leech has cured his sin?
Honesty? Our law of life is Gain —
We must get gold or be accounted fools;
The lovable, the generous, must be crushed
And substituted by the hard and shrewd.
What is it, Christ, this thing called Christian life,
Where Christ is not, where ninety slave for ten,
And never own a flower save when they steal it,
And never hear a bird save when they cage it?

Oh, Man's blind hope — Prometheus, thine the gift —
That bids him live when reason bids him die!
We cling to this, as sailors to a spar;
We see that this is Truth: that men are one,
Nor king nor slave among them save by law;
We see that law is crime, save God's sweet code
That laps the world in freedom: trees and men
And every life around us, days and seasons,
All for their natural order on the planet,
To live their lives, an hour, a hundred years,
Equal, content, and free — nor curse their souls
With trade's malign unrest, with books that breed
Disparity, contempt for those who cannot read;
With cities full of toil and sin and sorrow
Climbing the devil-built hill called Progress!

Prometheus, we reject thy gifts for Christ's!
Selfish and hard were thine, but His are sweet:
"Sell what thou hast and give it to the poor!"

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PROMETHEUS—CHRIST

Him we must follow to the great Commune,
Reading His book of Nature, growing wise
As planet men, who own the earth and pass;
Him we must follow till foul Cant and Caste
Die like disease, and Mankind, freed at last,
Tramples the complex life and laws and limits
That stand between all living things and Freedom!

*Life is a certainty,
Death is a doubt;
Men may be dead
While they're walking about.
Love is as needful
To being as breath,
Loving is dreaming,
And waking is death.*

FROM THE HEIGHTS

COME to me for wisdom," said the mountain;
"In the valley and the plain
There is Knowledge dimmed with sorrow in the gain;
There is Effort, with its hope like a fountain;
There, the chained rebel, Passion;
Laboring Strength and fleeting Fashion;
There, Ambition's leaping flame,
And the iris-crown of Fame;
But those gains are dear forever
Won from loss and pain and fever.
Nature's gospel never changes:
Every sudden force deranges;
Blind endeavor is not wise:
Wisdom enters through the eyes;
And the seer is the knower,
Is the doer and the sower.

"Come to me for riches," said the peak;
"I am leafless, cold, and calm;
But the treasures of the lily and the palm
They are mine to bestow on those who seek.
I am gift and I am giver
To the verdured fields below,
As the motherhood of snow
Daily gives the newborn river.

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FROM THE HEIGHTS

As a watcher on a tower,
Listening to the evening hour,
Sees the roads diverge and blend,
Sees the wandering currents end
Where the moveless waters shine
On the far horizon line —
All the storied Past is mine;
All its strange beliefs still clinging;
All its singers and their singing;
All the paths that led astray;
All the meteors once called day;
All the stars that rose to shine.
Come to me — for all are mine!

“Come to me for safety,” said the height.
“In the future as the past
Road and river end at last
Like a raindrop in the ever-circling sea.
Who shall know by lessened sight
Where the gain and where the loss
In the desert they must cross?
Guides who lead their charge from ills,
Passing soon from town to town,
Through the forest and the down,
Take direction from the hills;
Those who range a wider land,
Higher climb until they stand
Where the past and future swing
Like a far blue ocean ring;

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FROM THE HEIGHTS

Those who sail from land afar
Leap from mountain-top to star.
Higher still from star to God
Have the spirit pilots trod,
Setting lights for mind and soul
That the ships may reach the goal.

They shall safely steer who see:
Sight is wisdom. Come to me!"

UNSPOKEN WORDS

THE kindly words that rise within the heart,
And thrill it with their sympathetic tone,
But die ere spoken, fail to play their part,
And claim a merit that is not their own.
The kindly word unspoken is a sin, —
A sin that wraps itself in purest guise,
And tells the heart that, doubting, looks within,
That not in speech, but thought, the virtue lies.

But 'tis not so: another heart may thirst
For that kind word, as Hagar in the wild —
Poor banished Hagar! — prayed a well might burst
From out the sand to save her parching child.
And loving eyes that cannot see the mind
Will watch the expected movement of the lip:
Ah! can ye let its cutting silence wind
Around that heart, and scathe it like a whip?

Unspoken words, like treasures in the mine,
Are valueless until we give them birth;
Like unfound gold their hidden beauties shine,
Which God has made to bless and gild the earth.
How sad 'twould be to see a master's hand
Strike glorious notes upon a voiceless lute!
But oh! what pain when, at God's own command,
A heart-string thrills with kindness, but is mute!

UNSPOKEN WORDS

Then hide it not, the music of the soul,
Dear sympathy, expressed with kindly voice,
But let it like a shining river roll
To deserts dry, — to hearts that would rejoice.
Oh! let the symphony of kindly words
Sound for the poor, the friendless, and the weak;
And he will bless you, — he who struck these chords
Will strike another when in turn you seek.

LOVE AND BE WISE

NOT on the word alone
Let love depend;
Neither by actions done
Choose ye the friend.

Let the slow years fly —
These are the test;
Never to peering eye
Open the breast.

Psyche won hopeless woe
Reaching to take;
Wait till your lilies grow
Up from the lake.

Gather words patiently;
Harvest the deed;
Let the winged years fly,
Sifting the seed.

Judging by harmony,
Learning by strife,
Seeking in unity
Precept and life.

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LOVE AND BE WISE

Seize the supernal —
Prometheus dies;
Take the external
On trust — and be wise.

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Y E S?

THE words of the lips are double or single,
True or false, as we say or sing,
But the words of the eyes that mix and mingle
Are always saying the same old thing!

THE EMPTY NICHE

TO ROBERT FULTON, S.J.

A KING once made a gallery of art,
With portraits of dead friends and living graced;
And at the end, 'neath curtains drawn apart,
An empty marble pedestal was placed.

And once a courtier asked him why he kept
The shadowed niche to fill his heart with dole;
"For absent friends," the monarch said, and wept;
"There still must be one absent to the soul."

And this is true of all the hearts that beat;
Though days be soft and summer pathways fair,
Be sure, while joyous glances round us meet,
The curtained crypt and vacant plinth are there.

They say the citron tree will never thrive
Transplanted from the soil where it matured;
Ah, would 'twere so that men could only live
Through working on where they had love secured!

The work men do is not their test alone,
The love they win is far the better chart;
As creeping tendrils shudder from the stone,
The vines of love avoid the frigid heart.

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THE EMPTY NICHE

"The People of the Book" men called the Jews —
Our priests are truly "People of the Word."
And he who serves the Master must not choose —
He renders feudal service to the Lord.

But we who love and lose will, like the king,
Still keep the alcove empty in the hall,
And hope, firm-hearted, that some day will bring
Our absent one to fill his pedestal.

*Though it lash the shallow that line the beach,
Afar from the great sea deeps,
There is never a storm whose might can reach
Where the vast leviathan sleeps.
Like a mighty thought in a quiet mind,
In the clear, cold depths he swims;
Whilst above him the pettiest form of his kind
With a dash o'er the surface skims.*

*There is peace in power: the men who speak
With the loudest tongues do least;
And the surest sign of a mind that is weak
Is its want of the power to rest.
It is only the lighter water that flies
From the sea on a windy day:
And the deep blue ocean never replies
To the sibilant voice of the spray.*

THE AMBER WHALE: A HARPOONEER'S STORY¹

WE were down in the Indian Ocean, after sperm,
and three years out;
The last six months in the tropics, and looking in
vain for a spout;
Five men up on the royal yards, weary of straining
their sight,
And every day like its brother, — just morning and
noon and night —
Nothing to break the sameness; water and wind and
sun
Motionless, gentle, and blazing, — never a change in
one.

Every day like its brother; when the noonday eight-
bells came,
'Twas like yesterday; and we seemed to know that
to-morrow would be the same.
The foremast hands had a lazy time: there was never
a thing to do;
The ship was painted, tarred down, and scraped, and
the mates had nothing new.

¹Whalemen have a strange belief as to the formation of
amber. They say it is a petrification of some internal part of
a whale, and they tell weird stories of enormous whales seen in
the warm latitudes that were almost entirely transformed into
the precious substance.

THE AMBER WHALE

We'd worked at sinnet and ratline till there wasn't
a yard to use,
And all we could do was watch and pray for a sperm
whale's spout — or news.
It was whaler's luck of the vilest sort; and though
many a volunteer
Spent his watch below on the lookout, never a whale
came near, —
At least of the kind we wanted; there were lots of
whales of a sort —
Killers and finbacks, and such like, as if they enjoyed
the sport
Of seeing a whale-ship idle; but we never lowered a
boat
For less than a blackfish, — there's no oil in killer's
or finback's coat.
There was rich reward for the lookout men, — tobacco
for even a sail,
And a barrel of oil for the lucky dog who'd be first to
"raise" a whale.

The crew was a mixture of every land, and many a
tongue they spake,
And when they sat in the fo'castle, enjoying an even-
ing smoke,
There were tales told, youngster, would make you
stare — stories of countless shoals
Of devil-fish in the Pacific and right-whales away at
the Poles.

THE AMBER WHALE

There was one of these fo'castle yarns that we always
loved to hear,
Kanaka and Maori and Yankee; all lent an eager ear
To that strange old tale that was always new, — the
wonderful treasure tale
Of an Old Down-Eastern harpooneer who had struck
an Amber Whale!

“It's just fifteen years ago,” said Mat, “since I shipped
as harpooneer
On board a bark in New Bedford, and came cruising
somewhere near
To this whaling-ground we're cruising now; but whales
were plenty then,
And not like now, when we scarce get oil to pay for
the ship and the men.
There were none of these oil-wells running then — at
least what shore folk term
An oil well in Pennsylvania — but sulphur-bottom
and sperm
Were plenty as frogs in a mudhole, and all of 'em big
whales, too.
One hundred barrels for sperm-whales, and for sulphur-
bottom, two.

“We were more to the east, off Java Straits, a little
below the mouth,
A hundred and five to the east'ard and nine degrees
to the south.

THE AMBER WHALE

And that was as good a whaling-ground for middling-sized, handy whales
As any in all the ocean, and 'twas always white with sails
From Scotland and Hull and New England, — for the whales were thick as frogs,
And 'twas little trouble to kill them, for they lay as quiet as logs.
And every night we'd go visiting the other whale-ships 'round,
Or p'r'aps we'd strike on a Dutchman, calmed off the Straits, and bound
To Singapore or Batavia, with plenty of schnapps to sell
For a few whale's teeth or a gallon of oil and the latest news to tell.
And in every ship of that whaling-fleet was one wonderful story told
How an Amber Whale had been seen that year that was worth its weight in gold.
And one man — mate of a Scotchman — said he'd seen away to the west,
A big school of sperm, and one whale's spout was twice as high as the rest.
And we knew that this was the Amber Whale, for we'd often heard before,
That his spout was twice as thick as the rest, and a hundred feet high or more.
And often when the lookout cried, "He blows!" the very hail

THE AMBER WHALE

Thrilled every heart with the greed of gold, — for
we thought of the Amber Whale.

“But never a sight of his spout we saw till the season
there went round,

And the ships ran down to the south’ard to another
whaling-ground.

We stayed to the last off Java, and then we ran to the
west,

To get our recruits at Mauritius, and give the crew a
rest.

Five days we ran in the trade winds, and the boys were
beginning to talk

Of their time ashore, and whether they’d have a
donkey ride or a walk,

And whether they’d spend their money in wine,
bananas, or pearls,

Or drive to the sugar plantations to dance with the
Creole girls —

But they soon got something to talk about. Five
days we ran west-sou’west,

But the sixth day’s log-book entry was a change from
all the rest;

For that was the day the masthead men made every
face turn pale

With the cry that we all had dreamed about, ‘*He
blows! the Amber Whale!*’

“And every man was motionless, and every speaker’s lip

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THE AMBER WHALE

Just stopped as it was, with the word half-said; there
wasn't a sound in the ship
Till the Captain hailed the masthead, 'Whereaway is
the whale you see?'
And the cry came down again, 'He blows! about four
points on our lee,
And three miles off, sir, — there he blows! he's going
to leeward fast!'
And then we sprang to the rigging and saw the great
whale at last!

"Ah! shipmates, that was a sight to see; the water
was smooth as a lake,
And there was the monster rolling, with a school of
whales in his wake.
They looked like pilot-fish round a shark, as if they
were keeping guard;
And, shipmates, the spout of that Amber Whale was
high as a sky-sail yard.
There was never a ship's crew worked so quick as our
whalemen worked that day,
When the Captain shouted 'Swing the boats, and be
ready to lower away!'
Then 'A pull on the weather-braces, men! let her
head fall off three points!'
And off she swung, with a quarter-breeze straining
the old ship's joints.
The men came down from the mastheads, and the
boats' crews stood on the rail,

THE AMBER WHALE

Stowing the lines and irons, and fixing paddles and sail.

And when all was ready we leant on the boats and looked at the Amber's spout,

That went up like a monster fountain, with a sort of rumbling shout,

Like a thousand railroad engines puffing away their smoke.

He was just like a frigate's hull capsized, and the swaying water broke

Against the sides of the great stiff whale: he was steering south-by-west, —

For the Cape, no doubt, for a whale can shape a course as well as the best.

We soon got close as was right to go; for the school might hear a hail

Or see the bark, and that was the last of our Bank-of-England Whale.

'Let her luff,' said the Old Man gently. 'Now, lower away, my boys,

And pull for a mile, then paddle, — and mind that you make no noise.'

"A minute more and the boats were down; and out from the hull of the bark

They shot with a nervous sweep of the oars, like dolphins away from a shark.

Each officer stood in the stern and watched, as he held the steering oar,

THE AMBER WHALE

And the crew bent down to their pulling, as they never pulled before.

“Our Mate was as thorough a whaleman as I ever met afloat;

And I was his harpooneer that day, and sat in the bow of the boat.

His eyes were set on the whales ahead, and he spoke in a low deep tone,

And told the men to be steady and cool, and the whale was all their own.

‘Bend to it, boys, for a few strokes more, bend to it steady and long!

Now, in with your oars, and paddles out, — all together and strong!’

Then we turned and sat on the gunwale, with our faces to the bow;

And the whales were right ahead, — no more than four ship’s length off now.

“There were five of ’em, hundred-barrelers, like guards round the Amber Whale;

And to strike him we’d have to risk being stove by crossing a sweeping tail;

But the prize and the risk were equal. ‘Mat,’ now whispered the Mate,

‘Are your irons ready?’ ‘Aye, aye, sir!’ ‘Stand up, then, steady, and wait

Till I give the word, then let ’em fly, and hit him below the fin

THE AMBER WHALE

As he rolls to wind'ard. Start her, boys! now's the
time to slide her in!
Hurrah! that fluke just missed us. Mind, as soon as
the iron's fast,
Be ready to back your paddles, — now in for it, boys,
at last
Heave! Again!'

"And two irons flew: the first sank in the joint,
'Tween the head and hump, — in the muscle; but the
second had its point
Turned off by striking the amber case, coming out
again like a bow,
And the monster carcass quivered, and rolled with
pain from the first deep blow.
Then he lashed the sea with his terrible flukes, and
showed us many a sign
That his rage was roused. 'Lay off,' roared the Mate,
'and all keep clear of the line!'
And that was a timely warning, for the whale made
an awful breach
Right out of the sea; and 'twas well for us that the
boat was beyond the reach
Of his sweeping flukes, as he milled around, and made
for the Captain's boat
That was right astern. And, shipmates, then my
heart swelled up in my throat
At the sight I saw: the Amber Whale was lashing the
sea with rage,

THE AMBER WHALE

And two of his hundred-barrel guards were ready now
to engage

In a bloody fight, and with open jaws they came to
their master's aid.

Then we knew the Captain's boat was doomed; but
the crew were no whit afraid, —

They were brave New England whalemén; and we
saw the harpooneer

Stand up to send in his irons, as soon as the whales
came near.

Then we heard the Captain's order, 'Heave!' and
saw the harpoon fly,

As the whales closed in with their open jaws; a shock,
and a stifled cry

Was all that we heard; then we looked to see if the
crew were still afloat, —

And nothing was there save a dull red patch, and the
boards of the shattered boat!

"But that was no time for mourning words; the other
two boats came in,

And one got fast on the quarter, and one aft the star-
board fin

Of the Amber Whale. For a moment he paused, as
if he were in doubt

As to whether 'twas best to run or fight. 'Lay on!'
the Mate roared out,

'And I'll give him a lance!' The boat shot in; and
the Mate, when he saw his chance

THE AMBER WHALE

Of sending it home to the vitals, four times he buried
his lance.

A minute more and a cheer went up, when we saw that
his aim was good;

For the lance had struck in a life-spot, and the whale
was spouting blood!

But now came the time of danger, for the school of
whales around

Had aired their flukes, and the cry was raised, 'Look
out, they're going to sound!'

And down they went with a sudden plunge, the Amber
Whale the last,

While the line ran smoking out of the tubs, he went
to the deep so fast.

Before you could count your fingers, a hundred fathoms
were out;

And then he stopped, for a wounded whale must come
to the top and spout.

"We hauled slack line as we felt him rise; and when
he came up alone,

And spouted thick blood, we cheered again, for we
knew he was all our own.

He was frightened now, and his fight was gone, —
right round and round he spun,

As if he was trying to sight the boats, or find the best
side to run.

But that was the minute for us to work; the boats
hauled in their slack,

THE AMBER WHALE

And bent on the drag-tubs over the stern to tire and
hold him back.
The bark was five miles to wind'ard, and the Mate
gave a troubled glance
At the sinking sun, and muttered, 'Boys, we must
give him another lance,
Or he'll run till night; and if he should head to wind'-
ard in the dark,
We'll be forced to cut loose and leave him, or else lose
run of the bark!
So we hauled in close, two boats at once, but only
frightened the whale;
And, like a hound that was badly whipped, he turned
and showed his tail,
With his head right dead to wind'ard; then as straight
and as swift he sped
As a hungry shark for a swimming prey; and bending
over his head,
Like a mighty plume, went his bloody spout. Ah,
shipmates, that was a sight
Worth a life at sea to witness! In his wake the sea
was white
As you've seen it after a steamer's screw, churning
up like foaming yeast.
And the boats went hissing along at the rate of twenty
knots at least,
With the water flush with the gunwale, and the oars
were all apeak,

THE AMBER WHALE

While the crews sat silent and quiet watching the long
white streak
That was traced by the line of our passage. We
hailed the bark as we passed,
And told them to keep a sharp lookout from the head
of every mast;
'And if we're not back by sundown,' cried the Mate,
'you keep a light
At the royal cross-trees. If he dies, we may stick to
the whale all night.'

"And past we swept with our oars apeak, and waved
our hands to the hail
Of the wondering men on the taffrail, who were watch-
ing our Amber Whale
As he surged ahead, just as if he thought he could
tire his enemies out.
I was almost sorrowful, shipmates, to see after each
red spout
That the great whale's strength was failing; the sweep
of his flukes grew slow
Till at sundown he made about four knots, and his
spout was weak and low.
Then said the Mate to his boat's crew: 'Boys, the
vessel is out of sight
To the leeward; now, shall we cut the line, or stick
to the whale all night?'
'We'll stick to the whale!' cried every man. 'Let
the other boats go back

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THE AMBER WHALE

To the vessel and beat to wind'ard, as well as they
can, in our track.'

"It was done as they said; the lines were cut, and the
crews cried out, 'Good speed!'
As we swept along in the darkness, in the wake of our
monster steed,
That went plunging on with the dogged hope that he'd
tire his enemies still —
But even the strength of an Amber Whale must break
before human will.
By little and little his power had failed as he spouted
his blood away,
Till at midnight the rising moon shone down on the
great fish as he lay
Just moving his flukes; but at length he stopped, and
raising his square black head
As high as the topmost cross-trees, swung round and
fell over — dead.

"And then rose a shout of triumph, — a shout that
was more like a curse
Than an honest cheer; but, shipmates, the thought
in our hearts was worse,
And 'twas punished with bitter suffering. We claimed
the whale as our own,
And said that the crew should have no share of the
wealth that was ours alone.

THE AMBER WHALE

We said to each other: 'We want their help till we get
the whale aboard,
So we'll let 'em think that they'll have a share till
we get the Amber stored;
And then we'll pay them their wages, and send them
ashore — *or afloat*
If they show their temper.' Ah, shipmates, no wonder
'twas that boat
And its selfish crew were cursed that night. Next
day we saw no sail,
But the wind and the sea were rising. Still, we held
to the drifting whale, —
And a dead whale drifts to windward, — going farther
away from the ship,
Without water or bread, or courage to pray with heart
or lip
That had planned and spoken the treachery. The
wind blew into a gale,
And it screamed like mocking laughter round our
boat and the Amber Whale.

"That night fell dark on the staring crew, and a hurri-
cane blew next day;
Then we cut the line, and we cursed the prize as it
drifted fast away,
As if some power under the waves were towing it out
of sight;
And there we were without help or hope, dreading the
coming night.

THE AMBER WHALE

Three days that hurricane lasted. When it passed,
two men were dead,
And the strongest one of the living had not strength
to raise his head,
When his dreaming swoon was broken by the sound of
a cheery hail,
And he saw a shadow fall on the boat, — it fell from
the old bark's sail!
And when he heard their kindly words, you'd think
he would have smiled
With joy at his deliverance; but he cried like a little
child,
And hid his face in his poor weak hands, — for he
thought of the selfish plan, —
And he prayed to God to forgive them all. And,
shipmates, I am the man! —
The only one of the sinful crew that ever beheld his
home;
For before the cruise was over, all the rest were under
the foam.
It's just fifteen years gone, shipmates," said Old Mat,
ending his tale,
"And I often pray that I'll never see another Amber
Whale."

POET AND LORD

GOD makes a poet, touches soul and sight,
And lips and heart, and sends him forth to sing;
His fellows, hearing, own the true birthright,
And crown him daily with the love they bring.

The king a lord makes by a parchment leaf;
Though heart be withered, and though sight be dim
With dullard brain and soul of disbelief —
Aye, even so — he makes a lord of him.

What, then, of one divinely kissed and sent
To fill the people with ideal words;
Who with his poet's crown is discontent,
And begs a parchment title with the lords?

THE WONDERFUL COUNTRY

THERE once was a time when, as old songs prove it,
The earth was not round, but an endless plain;
The sea was as wide as the heavens above it —
Just millions of miles, and begin again.
And that was the time — aye, and more's the pity
It ever should end! — when the world could play,
When singers told tales of a crystal city
In a wonderful country far away!

But the schools must come with scales and measures,
To limit the visions and weigh the spells;
They scoffed at the dreams and the rainbow treasures,
And circled the world in their parallels;
They charted the vales and the sunny meadows,
Where a poet might ride for a year and a day;
They sounded the depths and they pierced the shadows,
Of that wonderful country far away.

For fancies they gave us their microscopics;
For knowledge a rubble of fact and doubt;
Wing-broken and caged, like a bird from the tropics,
Romance at the wandering stars looked out.
Cold Reason, they said, is the earthly Eden;
Go, study its springs and its ores assay;
But fairer the flowers and fields forbidden
Of that wonderful country far away.

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THE WONDERFUL COUNTRY

They questioned the slumbering baby's laughter,
And cautioned its elders to dream by rule;
All mysteries past and to come hereafter
Were settled and solved in their common school.
But sweeter the streams and the wild birds singing,
The friendships and loves that were true alway;
The gladness unseen, like a far bell ringing,
In that wonderful country far away.

Nay, not in their Reason our dear illusion,
But truer than truths that are measured and
weighed —
O land of the spirit! where no intrusion
From bookmen or doubters shall ay be made!
There still breaks the murmuring sea to greet us
On shadowy valley and peaceful bay;
And souls that were truest still wait to meet us
In that wonderful country far away!

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